DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 262 872 PS 015 371

AUTHOR	Fried, Mindy; O'Reilly, Elaine
TITLE	How Does Your Community Grow? Planting Seeds for Quality Day Care. A Citizen Action Manual.
INSTITUTION	Massachusetts State Office for Children, Boston.
SPONS AGENCY	Administration for Children, Youth, and Families (DHHS), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE	Aug 85
NOTE	102p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Massachusetts Office for Children, 150 Causeway Street, Boston, MA 02114 ($5.95, plus $2.00 shipping).
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC05 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Advocacy; Certification; *Citizen Participation; Computer Oriented Programs; *Day Care; Day Care Centers; Early Childhood Education; Educational Quality; Employer Supported Day Care; Evaluation Criteria; *Evaluation Methods; Lobbying; Policy Formation; *Quality Control; Recruitment; *State Standards; Volunteers
IDENTIFIERS	*Massachusetts; *Networks (Persons)

ABSTRACT

This manual, which presents the principles and steps involved in the two-year Citizen Involvement for Day Care Quality Project in Massachusetts, serves as a guide for developing a citizen network to address the need for quality day care. The Project was housed by the Office for Children (OFC), the state agency which licenses and monitors all day care facilities in Massachusetts, and funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children, Youth, and Families. Each chapter describes a component of the Project, including an overview of its beginnings and accomplishments. Then key principles and specific tips are extrapolated. These tips can apply to other contexts, such as volunteer recruitment and training, skill building, designing written materials, conflict resolution, designing and running successful meetings, and coalition building. Throughout the manual case examples illustrating technical skills and theoretical principles are introduced to show the complexity of the issues. In addition, users are encouraged to apply the techniques and principles to other issues and situations unique to day care needs in other states and communities. Specific chapters cover: the day care system in Massachusetts and its state agencies; citizen action: basic principles and strategies of the project; recruitment; improving day care quality; employer-supported day care; revising state standards; lobbying and policymaking; computerized resource services; project evaluation; and resources for evaluation of day care centers. (DST)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☒ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

- Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy

ED262872

HOW DOES YOUR COMMUNITY GROW?

Planting Seeds For Quality Day Care

A Citizen Action
Manual by
Mindy Fried &
Elaine O'Reilly

Patricia Divine-Hawkins
Government Project Director
Administration for Children, Youth & Families
Washington, D.C.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Mindy Fried

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

PS 015371

Office for Children
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Michael S. Dukakis, Governor
© August, 1985

Acknowledgements

We would like to extend special recognition to the hundreds of citizens who contributed to the success of the Citizen Involvement for Day Care Quality (CIDCQ) Project, including those who participated in Proposal Review Committees, Program Review Committees and Employer-Supported Day Care Committees. Special thanks to the Advisory Committee on Purchase Standards, including Gwen Morgan who co-chaired the committee and Martha Sperandio and Susan Fletcher of the Department of Social Services who made possible the implementation of revised purchase standards, and Lee Block, student intern.

Special thanks to Community Representatives who staffed CIDCQ activities at the local level and to Regional Coordinators and Regional Directors who supported those activities. Thanks to members of the Advocacy Unit, including Len Thomas, Jan Anderson and Joyce Mathon-Trotman, and staff of the Licensing Unit, including Francis Barrett and members of the Forms Committee. Thanks to Gloria Clark, Director of the Office for Children (OFC), who proudly promoted the CIDCQ Project.

We are also grateful for the valuable reviewing of this manual by our Manual Advisory Committee, including Jan Anderson, Francis Barrett, Kit Hinga, Yvonne Rousseau, Mary Thomas, Joyce Mathon-Trotman, Dennis Santoro, from OFC; and Diane Balser, Andrea Genser, Diane Levin, Gladys Maged, Gwen Morgan, Micki Seligson, Peter Sessa; and special thanks to Myrna Greenfield.

Thanks to John Cuneo who initially conceived the CIDCQ Project and Patricia Divine-Hawkins, our Project Director from the Administration for Children, Youth and Families in the office of Human Development Services, Department of Health and Human Services.

Thanks to Nilsa Rivera for her support and on-going involvement, including the word-processing of the manual. Thanks to Dennis Santoro for his computer assistance. Thanks to Sue Niewiarowski for production coordination and design; Ellen Shub for photography; Williams Graphics for typesetting; McNaughton and Gunn, Inc. for printing.

Special thanks to the children, parents and staff of the Thorndike Street Day Care Center in Cambridge, and the Roxbury Tenants of Harvard Center in Boston for allowing us to photograph the daily activities in their centers.

And finally, thanks to Stuart Langton of Tufts University Lincoln Filene Center who evaluated the CIDCQ Project and Jim O'Brien for his valuable editorial assistance.

This manual is dedicated to the hundreds of Council for Children volunteers and numerous Office for Children staff who participated in the Citizen Involvement for Day Care Quality Project. It is because of their commitment to quality day care that we are able to share their experiences, discoveries and wisdom with you in this manual.

Contents

Chapter 1 **Introduction** 1

Chapter 2 **The Massachusetts Context** 5

The Office For Children 6

How is the Office For Children Organized? 7

What Are the Responsibilities of Councils for Children? 8

How Did the Citizen Involvement for Day Care Quality Fit Within the OFC? 10

The Day Care System in Massachusetts 10

How Care is Purchased 10

Type of Care and Populations Served 12

Chapter 3 **Citizens Take Action: Basic Principles and Strategies of the Project** 15

Chapter 4 **Recruitment** 19

Why Do People Get Involved? 20

How Do You Get People Involved and Keep Volunteers? 21

Chapter 5 **Improving the Quality of Day Care: What Citizens Can Do Locally** 25

Indicators of Quality 26

Training: Developing the Team 29

Phase I: Proposal Review Training 30

Phase II: Program Review Training 31

Influencing the Spending of State Day Care Dollars 32

Conflict of Interest 33

Site Visits 33

Reviewing Proposals: Methodology 34

Affecting Quality: Program Review 37

Conducting Program Reviews 38

Chapter 6 **Employer-Supported Child Care: What Can Citizens Do?** 43

Training 47

What Have the Committees Done? 48

Chapter 7 **Revising Quality Standards for State-Funded Day Care** 55

Advisory Committee "Design" 56

Relationship/Coordination Between Various Members and Organizations 58

Initial Meetings 59

Getting Started and Staying On Course 60

Feedback Process 61

Final Recommendations 62

Controversial Issues 65

Chapter 8 **Beyond the Citizen Involvement Project: Lobbying and Policymaking** 69

On the Local Level 70

On the Statewide Level 71

Chapter 9 **Computerizing Day Care** 73

Why Computerize Information? 74

Selecting Equipment 76

Procuring Equipment in a State Bureaucracy 76

Confidentiality 77

Chapter 10 **Evaluation: The Why's and How's** 79
Selecting and Evaluator 81
Methodology and Documentation 81
Fees 82
What If There's No Budget? 82
Chapter 11 **Conclusion** 83
Appendix A **Improving the Quality of Day Care** 87
Resource Bibliography 88
Site Visit Checklist 88
Program Review of a Day Care Center: Director's Interview 91
Resource Bibliography for Trainers 92
Appendix B **Employer-Supported Day Care** 95
"Marketing" Child Care 96
Resource Bibliography 99
Day Care: The Critical Link Between Work and Family 100
Fact Sheet 101

1

Introduction

Chapter 1

Day care is the fourth largest expenditure for working families, after food, housing and taxes. The need for day care is increasing with the steady influx of women into the labor market. In only one-half of American families are relatives available to provide that care. In the other half—a proportion which will soon be increasing—parents are turning to "market" care, purchased in day care centers or family day care homes.

To ensure a high quality day care system, there must be structures in place at the local and state levels.

Some states have developed successful coalitions to increase public awareness of day care issues, as well as to lobby for increased funds for services. Others have tried but have been confronted with barriers. These range from state administrations that are insensitive and uneducated about the importance of day care to difficulties in organizing a coalition, given varied ideologies, religious orientations and political perspectives of individuals and groups in the "day care community."

In this manual we present the principles and practical steps which marked our work with the two-year Citizen Involvement for Day Care Quality Project carried out in Massachusetts and funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children, Youth and Families.

The Citizen Involvement Project was founded in the belief that individuals, when empowered with information, a sense of involvement, and a belief in their potential to effect change, can truly make an impact on social services. We began with three basic notions:

- Children and their parents have a right to quality day care;
- Citizens can influence state funding for day care in their communities, as well as monitor the quality of day care services; and
- Employers have a responsibility to respond to the child care needs of their employees and communities.

The Project was housed by the Office for Children (OFC), the state agency which licenses and monitors all day care facilities in Massachusetts. OFC also has a statewide advocacy network of volunteers, called Councils for Children, which assess local needs, review funding proposals in a wide variety of children's service areas, and monitor services.

In addition, many Councils organize parent support groups, hold special educational events, lobby on children's issues at the state level, and work to develop new resources in their communities to meet identified needs.

The Project worked with the volunteer Council for Children network. We provided intensive training and assistance to volunteers on how to assess quality day care services and advocate for employer involvement in child care. As a result of the Citizen Involvement Project, over 150 trained volunteers throughout Massachusetts now play an important role in monitoring community day care services and encouraging employer-sponsored programs.

In tandem with these community-based activities, the Project created a statewide Advisory Committee to the Department of Social Services (DSS), which funds about one-third of all day care placements in Massachusetts. This committee reviewed and recommended revisions in DSS's standards for quality in state-funded day care centers.

Finally, the Project began to computerize statewide day care information, to help parents seeking appropriate care and day care officials needing up-to-date records on the state's many day care centers.

The Project had a solid base upon which to build: the Office for Children and its state-funded, statewide citizen network. Such a network may not exist in many states. Nevertheless, we believe that our experience will be helpful to a wide variety of community activists, day care advocates, state and local officials, and others seeking to stimulate citizen involvement in day care.

In each chapter, we briefly describe a component of the Project to give an overview of where we began and what we accomplished. Then we extrapolate key principles and offer specific tips which can be applied in other contexts, covering such areas as:

- Volunteer recruitment and training;
- Skill-building;
- Designing of written materials;
- Conflict resolution;
- Designing and running successful meetings; and
- Coalition building.

Throughout the manual, we present case examples which bring to life the technical skills and theoretical principles that guided us. Some are success stories. Some are stories without an ending. All expose the complexity of issues that emerged.

While we focus on specific tools and avenues for day care advocacy, we encourage readers to apply our principles and techniques to other issue areas.

5

The Massachusetts Context

Chapter 2

The Citizen Involvement Project was situated within the Massachusetts Office for Children, the state agency which licenses and monitors children's programs, provides assistance to parents seeking services for their children, and serves as an advocate for children's issues through a network of citizen volunteers.

In this chapter we will:

- Provide a brief description of the Office for Children (OFC) and its citizen arm, the Councils for Children;
- Establish a framework within which to view the Citizen Involvement Project and its operations in Massachusetts; and
- Briefly describe the day care system in Massachusetts and its relationship to state agencies.

The Office for Children

Despite the efforts of the "war on poverty" of the 1960's, children and families in Massachusetts were still "falling between the cracks," or not quite fitting the eligibility requirements for social services. While numerous state agencies provided some children's services, they served only specific kinds of children—low-income, physically ill, court-involved, school-age, special-needs. Services to adults were equally scattered and underfunded.

In 1970, the Massachusetts Advisory Council on Education, a legislatively established advisory group on public education, recognized that one of the overriding problems facing Massachusetts was the education and development of young children. The Council established the Massachusetts Early Education Project. Researchers and other staff were commissioned to conduct a comprehensive 18-month research project on child care and early childhood education in the Commonwealth. *Child Care in Massachusetts: The Public Responsibility,* their final report issued in February, 1972, was described as "...the most thorough effort by any state so far to describe for its people the condition of their families, the care and education of young children and to lay out an inclusive program for the future."

In their search for services, parents were confronted with a maze of agencies and a lack of formalized mechanisms for guiding individuals through the system. Children were shuffled from agency to agency as the responsibility for services was denied and transferred to the next. Coordination and cooperation among the several dozen state agencies serving children and families was almost non-existent. In Massachusetts, no agency existed whose sole interest was the needs of children.

Furthermore, parents and providers of children's services in local communities were often excluded from state decisions affecting children's services across the state.

In response to this situation, the Massachusetts Legislature created the Office for Children in July, 1972. This marked the birth of a state agency to serve as the advocate for children in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. One of the central points of this creative legislation was the requirement that the voices of citizens around the state be heard by government officials. The vehicle for citizen involvement, as established by the legislation, is the volunteer Councils for Children which act as advocates for children and families throughout Massachusetts. According to a Council member of long standing, "The major motivation for my joining a council was the possibilities that this new agency offered for advocacy to really occur. Active, controversial stands needed to be taken and people believed that their investment in the Council for Children would result in positive changes for children in Massachusetts."

Specific functions of the Office for Children include:

- Establishing and supporting local Councils for Children, who have the authority to determine the needs of children in their area, recommend state expenditures, evaluate local children's programs, and advocate on behalf of children in their communities;
- Developing and enforcing licensing standards for day care centers, family day care homes, group care, foster care, temporary shelter and adoption placement agencies;
- Providing information, referral and individual advocacy to people seeking services for children;
- Reviewing budgets of state agencies serving children and making recommendations regarding funding levels; and
- Establishing a Statewide Advisory Council to advise the Director and Governor.

The strength of the Office for Children lies in its dual advocacy structure which includes group advocacy and individual case advocacy on behalf of children needing services. It is the interface of these two functions that enables the Office for Children to combine data generated through individual case advocacy with action to develop resources for meeting those needs.

How Is the Office for Children Organized?

The Office for Children functions on three different levels: area, regional and central. There are roughly 40 area offices. Each office houses both an individual case advocacy program called Help for Children and a community development program which facilitates program development on a local level, acts as a local resource to the citizen volunteer Council for Children, and provides technical assistance to providers of children's services. A typical office has three full-time staff: one Help for Children staff member; one community representative who serves as the community development specialist and also staffs the volunteer Council for Children; and one secretary.

Area offices range in size from those which cover large geographic boundaries to those which include only a few high-density neighborhoods within the city of Boston. Each area's working agenda reflects the diversity and varied needs of its children and families, the level and quality of children's services, and the unique characteristics of the area.

The second level is regional. Six regional offices provide support and supervision to area office staff. Licensors responsible for the regulation of all children's programs—group day care, family day care and foster care—are also located in the regional offices. This regional structure allows areas to work together on issues of common concern. Regional staff also form a vital link in the information chain,

8

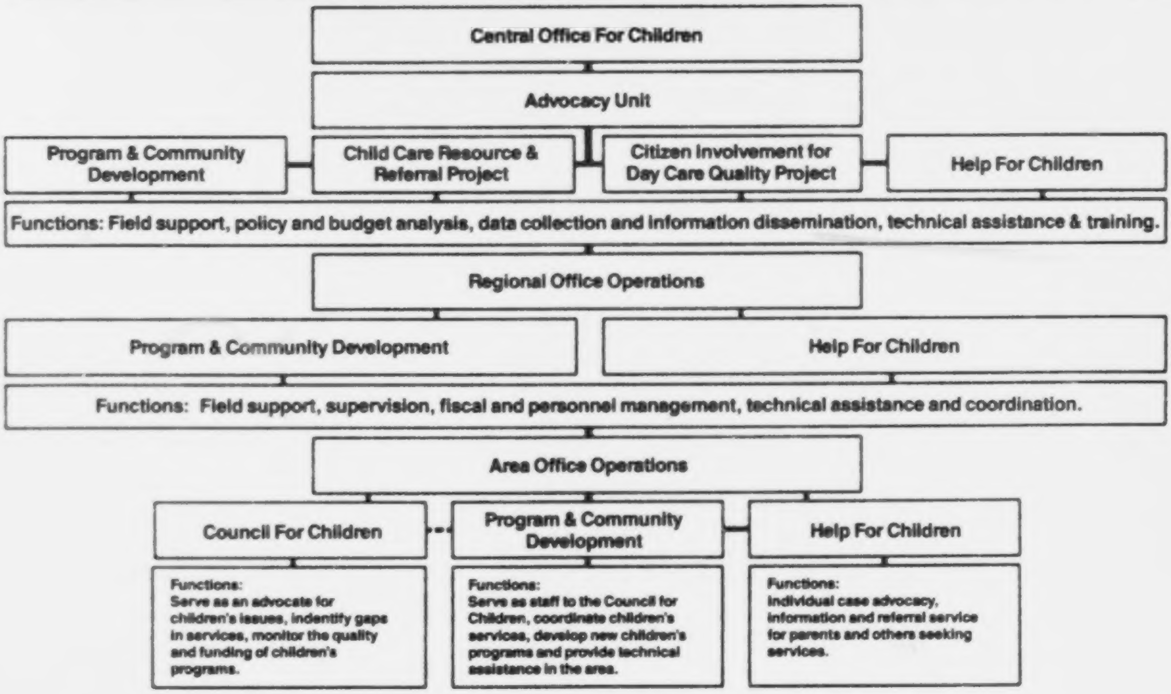
exchanging needs and resources between local, regional and state levels.

Finally, the central office of OFC performs administrative and coordinative functions, such as information gathering and dissemination, leadership and policy development, technical assistance and support to field staff, legislative and budget analysis, development of agency regulations, legal counsel, and fiscal and personnel management. Special projects, like the Citizen Involvement Project, operate out of the central office.

What Are the Responsibilities of Councils for Children?

Anyone who is interested in children's issues can become a general member of the local Council for Children. Each Council must also have a board of directors which:

- Is elected by the general members;
- Has at least 21 members;
- Is more than 50% "consumer members" (parent or citizen who does not provide services for children), with the remainder representing various providers of children's services;
- Is reflective of the diverse populations in the area (geographic residence, ethnic and racial minorities and various income levels); and
- Is representative of the broad range of children's issues (adolescent services, foster care, general and special education, day care and health and welfare).


Central Office For Children
Advocacy Unit
Program & Community Development
Child Care Resource & Referral Project
Citizen Involvement for Day Care Quality Project
Help For Children
Functions: Field support, policy and budget analysis, data collection and information dissemination, technical assistance & training.
Regional Office Operations
Program & Community Development
Help For Children
Functions: Field support, supervision, fiscal and personnel management, technical assistance and coordination.
Area Office Operations
Council For Children
Program & Community Development
Help For Children
Functions: Serve as an advocate for children's issues, indentify gaps in services, monitor the quality and funding of children's programs.
Functions: Serve as staff to the Council for Children, coordinate children's services, develop new children's programs and provide technical assistance in the area.
Functions: Individual case advocacy, information and referral service for parents and others seeking services.

Council for Children members are as diverse as our children are. A low-income parent of two children, a university professor, a young adult with no children, a worker in a day care center, a parent of a physically challenged child and a high school student—all may be members of the same Council for Children. Members have their own special reasons for becoming active in a Council, but they all share the belief that citizens have an important role to play in securing the best possible services for children. As explained by a former Council member, whose special interest was in combatting child abuse and neglect, "My initial attraction to the council was the intensity and commitment of the group. Another bonding factor was that I was allowed to give whatever I could...my offering was welcome. This was a different kind of activism for me, this group shared my beliefs. I wasn't alone."

The legislation which created the Councils for Children authorized these citizen groups to serve as advocates for children. In fulfilling this important role, Councils are also charged with the responsibility to:

- Identify the needs of children and the gaps in services available in local communities;
- Make recommendations on the allocation of state and federal dollars for local children's programs;
- Review the quality of local children's programs; and
- Determine the priorities for new or expanded services within their area.

The activities of the Councils for Children are conducted through committees or task forces, to resolve a particular problem or issue.

Based on individual requests for assistance and the identification of gaps in services, Councils have developed various new programs, including shelters for runaway youth, support services for parents with special-needs children, health clinics for teenagers, day care programs, peer counseling programs in high schools, and parent education programs.

In 1984, over 2000 local Council for Children members participated in children's advocacy efforts in their communities.

How Did the Citizen Involvement for Day Care Quality Project Fit Within the Office for Children?

For the Citizen Involvement for Day Care Quality Project, the Office for Children provided the base upon which to build. Councils for Children already had varying levels of interest and experience in day care issues. The need for more and better quality day care was articulated by many parents who contacted OFC for assistance in finding child care. And providers, employers and government officials were becoming more vocal and visible in their concern about day care. Since OFC is also responsible for the licensing of all day care facilities, the licensing staff were identified as a resource to citizen Councils. The reverse was also true: citizens could provide licensors with valuable information about day care programs.

The Citizen Involvement Project provided a focus for activities to improve the quality of day care in local communities. Staff provided training and technical assistance to Councils and served as a resource to all agency staff and citizens.

Organizationally, the Project was located at the central level. This facilitated the development of relationships with the various departments within the Office: Licensing, Community Development, Help for Children and Legal. Regional office staff provided advice, support and information and helped organize training and other events associated with the Project.

The Day Care System in Massachusetts

Following is a brief description of the Massachusetts day care system. Our intent is not to present all the complexities of the day care system or to offer this system as a model, but rather to describe a method of analyzing and demystifying the day care delivery system in your state.

How Care is Purchased

In Massachusetts, two state agencies purchase day care services: the Department of Social Services (DSS) which provides all social services for families, and the Department of Public Welfare (DPW) which is responsible for all financial assistance programs (e.g., Aid to Families with Dependent Children, General Relief, Food Stamps, Medicaid). In 1984 there were approximately 22,125 children receiving state-subsidized day care, 17,295 through DSS and 4,830 through DPW's voucher day care for Employment and Training participants.

TIPS: Selecting a Sponsoring Agency

The commitment and support of a sponsoring agency is vital to the success of any special project. A project similar to this one could be sponsored by a range of organizations, depending upon your resources, the bureaucratic system and the needs in your community. The sponsor need not be a state-level agency as it was in Massachusetts. Possible sponsoring organizations could include:

- Existing citizen or volunteer organizations;
- Coalitions of parents or day care advocates;
- Town or city committees;
- Neighborhood ethnic associations;
- Agencies with a national network like United Way, YWCA/YMCA, Big Brother/Big Sister;
- Universities or colleges, particularly those involved in community affairs, or early childhood education;
- Women's organizations such as the League of Women Voters or Junior League;
- Local child care resource and referral agencies; and
- A new organization created for this purpose.

What is important in selecting a sponsoring organization? It must have the trust and confidence of both citizens and the day care community. Consideration should also be given to the agency's track record regarding citizen or parent involvement, appropriateness of a project such as this to the organization's purpose and current activities, motivation and level of commitment to the project. Most importantly they should share your belief that day care should be widely available, affordable and of the best quality.

The total day care budget was $64 million. It is estimated that only one-sixth of eligible families receive subsidized services. Most families receiving subsidized care pay a certain fee for that care themselves, according to a state established sliding fee scale.

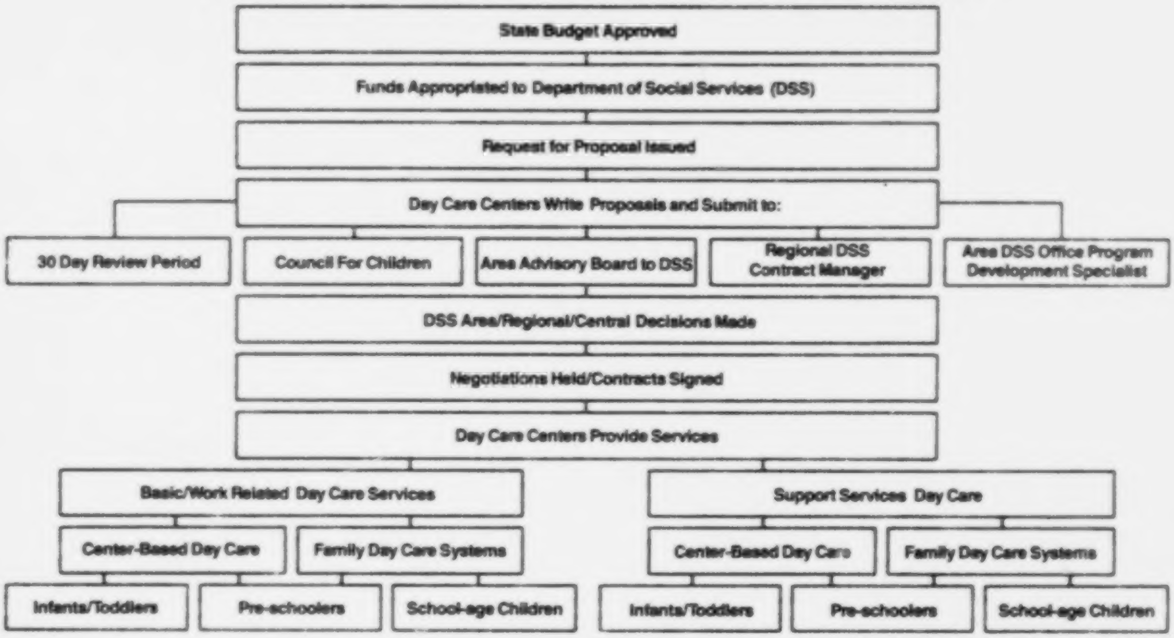
DSS purchases day care from private providers, including day care centers and family day care systems, through a "contract-for-services" agreement. This means that DSS selects each private provider and purchases day care for a specific number of children at specific daily rates of reimbursement per child. (The average pre-school rate for state-contracted care in Massachusetts is $13.50/day.)

Approximately one-third of the licensed centers and family day care systems choose to participate in this state contracting system. In Massachusetts day care centers are defined as those facilities caring for more than six children. A family day care system is an organized group of family day care homes sponsored by the same agency which provides supervision, training and referral. Family day care providers are individuals who care for up to six children in the caregiver's home.

Parents who need subsidized day care go directly to private day care providers that have a contract with DSS and the agencies determine whether or not the family is eligible, based on their income. If they are and a state-subsidized placement is vacant, the child is placed. Unfortunately, many providers throughout the state are forced to place eligible children on waiting lists due to limitations in state resources.

Prior to purchasing day care services from private providers the Department of Social Services conducts a selection process that

Contracted Day Care Services in Massachusetts


State Budget Approved
Funds Appropriated to Department of Social Services (DSS)
Request for Proposal Issued
Day Care Centers Write Proposals and Submit to:
30 Day Review Period
Council For Children
Area Advisory Board to DSS
Regional DSS Contract Manager
Area DSS Office Program Development Specialist
DSS Area/Regional/Central Decisions Made
Negotiations Held/Contracts Signed
Day Care Centers Provide Services
Basic/Work Related Day Care Services
Support Services Day Care
Center-Based Day Care
Family Day Care Systems
Center-Based Day Care
Family Day Care Systems
Infants/Toddlers
Pre-schoolers
School-age Children
Infants/Toddlers
Pre-schoolers
School-age Children

involves Councils for Children and DSS staff. DSS designs a Request for Proposal (RFP) which describes the type of care the state intends to purchase; who would be eligible for services; exactly what services the state will buy; purchase standards that the care must meet and legal restrictions. This RFP is distributed to interested providers with instructions and a timeline (usually 30 days) for completion.

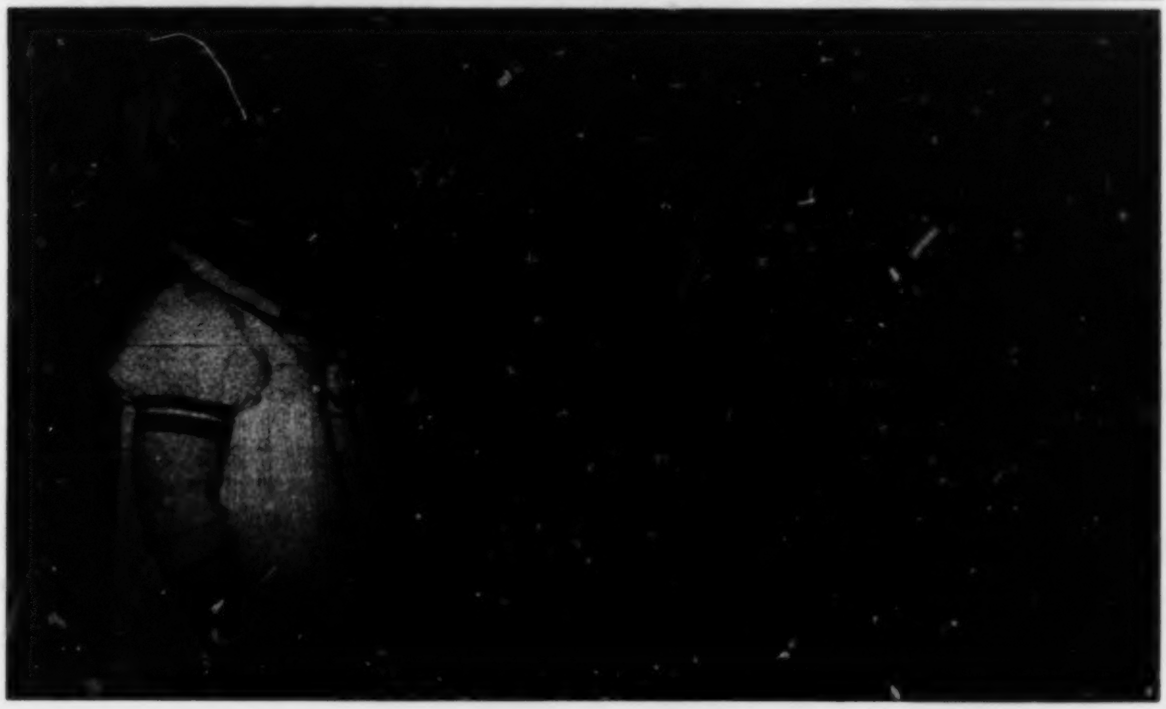
Councils for Children and DSS's own advisory boards then conduct a citizen review of all submitted proposals (again usually 30 days). Citizens read proposals, may visit providers and interview staff. Recommendations to fund, to fund with conditions, or not to fund these proposals are then sent to DSS.

After receiving all comments on proposals, DSS makes the final decisions and awards contracts. Contracts—agreements that outline the specifics of what DSS will purchase—are then negotiated with individual private providers for the duration of the fiscal year. This process is repeated annually.

The Citizen Involvement Project teams focussed their activities on DSS-contracted day care, engaging in this proposal review process as well as in monitoring DSS-funded day care centers.

Type of Care and Populations Served

Day care is a critical service that enables parents to work. It is a support service that helps families under stress. And it is a child development service which offers young children peer interaction, social and cognitive development and the development of relationships with adults.



Recognizing the varying functions of day care for families, DSS purchases two different types of day care:

- "Basic or work-related" day care is available for eligible families who need day care in order to work; and
- "Supportive services" day care, often including transportation, social services and additional staff, is available for children who have been abused or neglected (or who are at risk of abuse or neglect), those who have special needs, and those whose parents are physically challenged.

All day care facilities must be licensed by the Office for Children. In addition to licensing regulations, DSS has standards for purchasing day care services. These purchasing standards include specific requirements on staff/child ratio, hours and days of operation, parent involvement, affirmative action and multicultural programming. In addition, fee collection, suspected child abuse reporting and other policies are outlined.

The types of available care include:

- Center based care—provided in a facility that serves more than six children on a regular basis;
- Family day care—provided for no more than six children in an individual's home; and
- Family day care systems—a group of family day care homes administered by a private agency.

Both basic and supportive day care are provided in day care centers and family day care systems. Independent family day care is only

TIPS:

You can have an impact on the day care system in your state, but first you have to understand it. While states vary in day care funding, regulation and policy, the resources for information are fairly standard:

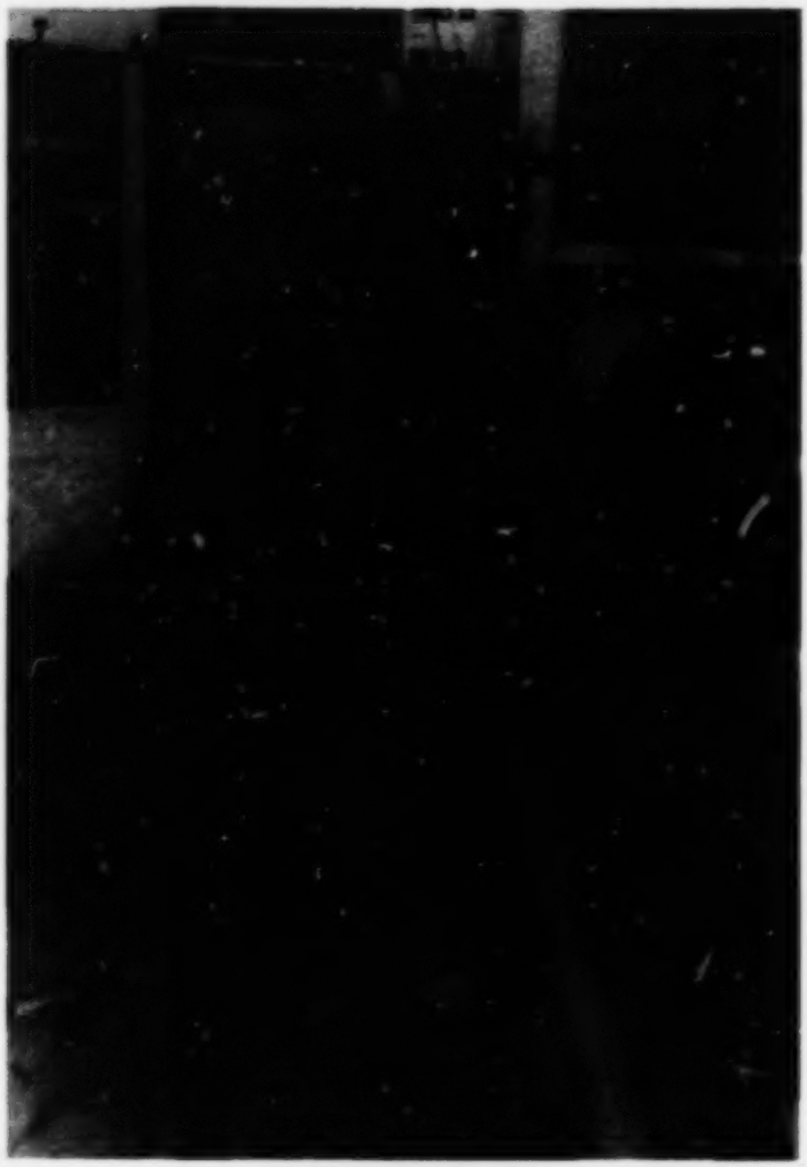
- You are your first resource! Take stock of what you and other advocates already know about your day care delivery system.
- Identify your gaps in information.
- Contact others. Ask them to join you or to act as resources. Likely sources include day care associations, women's organizations, advocacy groups, professional associations and parents' groups. (See Chapter 4 on Recruitment)
- Request assistance from legislators (particularly members of legislative committees on human services issues). They often have information on state funding levels for day care and the state agencies which purchase and monitor care.
- Develop relationships with the state agency staff who are responsible for subsidized care in your area.
- Ask them for available documents, such as state budget requests, policy reports, etc.
- Contact your Governor's office and request budget and policy information on day care. If they don't have it, at least you are planting a seed.
- Finally, don't be afraid to ask questions until you fully understand the system in your state.

As one Council member noted, "It's very important to know what's in your community. I only knew the place I was working in. The best way to get to know is to get involved. It can only benefit children."

subsidized through the provision of basic day care for DPW's Employment and Training participants.

The populations served include infant, toddler, pre-school and school-age children.

As in most other states, the demand for day care in Massachusetts far exceeds the supply. Finding care in a tight child care market has increased the need to help parents find and select quality day care for their children as well as develop new resources. In 1984, as a result of advocacy activity, the Massachusetts legislature responded to these needs by allocating $300,000 to begin developing a network of Child Care Resource and Referral agencies (CCRR's). In 1985, the network expanded to cover more areas of the state and has acted as a vehicle for linking parents, providers and employers.



15

Citizens Take Action:
Basic Principles and Strategies of the Project
Chapter 3

> **I don't think that the general population believes that Jane Doe, your everyday person, could go into a day care center, interview staff, observe classrooms and then offer suggestions for improvements. This project really proved to people that they could do it.**
>
> *Office for Children community representative, Southeastern Massachusetts*

Strengthened by training, staff support and their own knowledge and concern for quality day care, teams of citizen Council for Children members visited local day care centers in Massachusetts and recommended to the Department of Social Services whether these facilities should receive state funding. Organized through the Citizen Involvement Project, these teams became familiar with their own communities and learned about the types of day care families need, the way in which the state is involved in purchasing care and the "indicators" of quality day care. In addition to making funding recommendations, the teams offered suggestions to providers and staff for improving the quality of care.

After these initial activities, teams conducted a more thorough review of the centers. They solicited comments from parents, staff and other community resources and they observed daily activities in the classrooms at the centers. Detailed reports were sent to the provider and to the state agency that purchases care in the center, describing the center's philosophy and operations and outlining the findings of the citizen teams. Included were recommendations for improving the quality of care provided, responsibilities of both the center and the state agency that purchases care as well as commendable aspects of the program. Planning, preparation and training were required prior to initiation of any local activities. By providing necessary resources, the Project set the stage for quality day care to become the focus of attention of those Councils who chose to participate.

Basic Principles

Prior to the Project, Councils had clearly articulated their concern for quality day care and the need for additional resources. The challenges for the Project were to respond to those concerns, create interest on the part of citizens and staff and to set in motion activities and practices that would carry on long after the life of the Project. Outlined below are the basic principles we followed in designing and implementing the Project:

- Believe in the ability of citizens to truly make a difference;
- Encourage, expect and respect citizen action;
- Assistance and leadership from the "outside" is usually welcome if invited, but shunned if it is imposed;
- Offer tangible reasons for participation and ensure that the project responds to community needs;
- Be realistic about how much you can undertake at any one time;
- Focus your efforts clearly;
- Be flexible in responding to participants' needs; and
- Be ready to deliver and keep commitments.

The Project offered volunteers an opportunity to learn new skills and utilize their knowledge and experiences. As noted by one community representative, "The Council's initial interest stemmed from the novel way in which the Project was presented... to offer support for current activities."

The resources of the Project—training, follow-up, technical assistance—served as the catalyst to spark interest. Initially, we presented the Project goals and objectives at regional meetings of chairpeople of local Councils for Children, to area office staff, to the Statewide Advisory Council to OFC, to state and private agencies which would potentially be affected and to interested groups such as League of Women Voters and day care organizations. In addition, a fact sheet and an executive summary of the Project were widely distributed.

Strategies to Achieve Results: Getting There From Here

In order to expand citizen action at the community level, the Project provided:

- Training on recruitment techniques, day care services, indicators of quality, group decision making and leadership;
- Materials including fact sheets, brochures, questionnaires and report outlines; and
- Technical assistance to area staff and Councils including timely information, networking, follow-up training and problem solving assistance.

In focussing our efforts, we targeted activities to improve the quality of day care programs which were seeking or already had state funds to serve infants, toddlers or pre-schoolers. These activities fall within the Council's legal mandate (see Chapter 2).

Project staff developed concrete activities such as training sessions, site visits, steps for conducting program reviews, implementation plans and scheduling with those staff and Councils participating in the Project. Communication and commitment were enhanced because all parties played a role in decision-making. Flexibility and compromise were essential since situations change, even after agreements or schedules are devised. Specific activities, designed to enhance the ability of citizens to work for improving the quality of care in state-funded day care centers included:

- Participating in training sessions;
- Reviewing proposals, or reading the applications, submitted to the state by centers seeking state funds;
- Visiting four of those centers during the first year of the Project;
- Submitting funding recommendations to the Department of Social Services;
- Conducting program reviews which include follow-up visits to two centers requiring more comprehensive observation of classrooms and gathering of information from parents and staff; and
- Issuing a program review report on each of those two centers.

Later chapters will discuss, in more detail, the specifics of these community-based activities, including the recruitment and training which prepared citizens to embark on these efforts.

Recruitment

Chapter 4

The recruitment of individuals to volunteer activities faces new challenges in the 1980's. For many, the demands of work, raising a family, relationships and special interests consume a great deal of time and energy. Many families are struggling to make ends meet, devoting most of their daily efforts to economic survival. As women increasingly enter the labor force, work and family concerns often take precedence for them and their partners over involvement in volunteer activities. At the same time, there has been an increased reliance on volunteers in all spheres of community life due to funding cuts in existing programs. This has created a unique situation in which volunteers are highly sought after and yet recruitment has become much more difficult. Recruitment is an often overlooked activity in volunteer organizations, particularly when work on issue-oriented efforts such as legislative activity, preventing the closing of a local school or program and monitoring the state budget process is so demanding. Given this situation and the new challenges of recruiting volunteers, we provided technical assistance and materials to help Councils for Children and community representatives in their recruitment efforts, including:

- A brochure which was then adapted for each individual area;
- A recruitment packet which included sample press releases and public service announcements, a checklist of potential recruits and organizations to contact and articles on recruitment, motivation, volunteerism and incentives;
- A workshop on recruitment which was conducted at a conference held for all Project participants; and
- Individual follow-up to areas.

Why Do People Get Involved?

In developing a recruitment campaign, it is important to understand the factors that motivate individuals to volunteer. Consider the types of individuals who would be attracted to your particular project and what they personally hope to get out of it. Citizens and staff involved with the Project offer the following comments:

I have my own children and couldn't find the kind of day care I was looking for when they were younger. I wanted to do something for other parents.

I acknowledge that people have a self interest and that's almost always positive. For the Citizen Involvement Project some of the volunteers had children of their own, or will soon. This motivated them to do more. Another used the Project to further her educational experiences and someone else just wanted to know more about day care in our area.

Day care was my drawing card.

Given their personal life experiences, community situations and the tremendous demand for day care, citizens were concerned over quality being shortchanged.

Volunteers were attracted to the Project activities for a variety of reasons. However, the primary forces resulting in successful recruitment included a blossoming public interest in day care, the fact that Project activities were community-based, the offering of resources and support and a perceived opportunity to develop new skills.

While motivations for volunteering will vary depending upon the individual, the type of project, time commitments and expectations of volunteers, some general principles apply. Consider the following motivational factors:

- Personal experiences make the particular issue important to the individual;
- People perceive an opportunity to make a tangible contribution;
- Issues reflect the individual's political and social concerns; and/or
- Involvement meets some personal needs of the individual: new skills, information, training, experiences with a group and peer interaction.

How Do You Get People Involved?

It is often easier to design recruitment strategies and decide where to target your campaign if you spend time identifying why an individual would get involved in your project and the kinds of individuals you want to attract. The Project targeted parents as a specific group to attract because they are the consumers of most day care services. Parents come in all shapes, sizes and colors and have children of various ages. They live in all types of neighborhoods, belong to a huge array of clubs and associations, and are situated at every income level. Because of these many factors, recruitment required a multifaceted approach utilizing as much creativity as area staff could muster.

The following press release published in the Cape Verdean News in January, 1984 presents a clear picture of the Project for potential volunteers.

Successful methods included:

Appealing personally to individuals

Networking with current Council for Children members

Appearing on local radio talk shows

Speaking at official meetings of local organizations (e.g. League of Women Voters, advisory boards, early childhood students, parents groups)

Publishing an article or press release in a local newspaper

Notifying parent groups directly (e.g., via local day care centers, pediatricians' offices, school newsletters)

Articulating specific ways for volunteers to get involved.

Council for Children

The Greater New Bedford Council for Children, a citizens advocacy organization, has been chosen to participate in a new project, the Citizen Involvement for Day Car Quality Project. In announcing this project, Cynthia Roderick, Chairperson of the Council stated: "This two-year project is designed to increase the role of parents and citizens in assessing the quality of care provided in local day care centers. This project will give citizens the unique opportunity to have a greater project impact on how the state spends its day care dollars."

A special committee is now being formed for this project. Tasks will consist of on-site visits of area centers, reviewing proposals for state-funding of centers, and conducting more in-depth studies of several centers. Training will be provided by the Office for Children for any citizen interested in working on this project.

According to Ms. Roderick, "This project is a wonderful opportunity for citizens and parents to 'make a difference' in the lives of children within our community. State systems can often make citizens feel powerless. This project takes away that powerlessness and allows those persons who make use of these services to affect how they will be delivered."

If you are interested in participating on this new Council for Children committee to improve the quality of day care in the New Bedford area, call Michele DeMary at 997-1617 today.

TIPS:

The key to successful recruitment is the use of very diverse techniques. The methods you select should be based on your needs for volunteers, your own creativity and style and your knowledge of what works best in your community.

- Get to know your community;
- Take the time to develop a focussed recruitment campaign;
- Decide what type(s) of people you are trying to attract;
- Develop techniques and design materials that will appeal to them;
- Determine places and groups where your potential volunteers are likely to have a connection;
- Network with other organizations and individuals to let them know what you are doing and the type of people you are looking for;
- Articulate a specific purpose, expectations, timeline and activities;
- Appeal to the personal and political interests of those people you hope to attract;
- Offer tangible benefits to your potential recruits;
- Explain why it is to their advantage to get involved with your project; and
- Most of all, articulate your commitment to support and assist volunteers.

Over 100 people were recruited to participate in activities to improve the quality of day care in their communities. Some individuals were brand-new recruits responding to press coverage or the personal request of a friend. Others were already involved with the Council, and the Project gave them a specific focus and purpose.

How Do You Keep Volunteers?

One of the most difficult issues confronting citizen volunteer organizations is that of maintaining a sufficient number of active, consistent members. Appreciation, encouragement, recognition and support are important. Realistic expectations which allow for success and a sense of accomplishment are essential.

For our volunteers, the major ingredient which built the momentum and carried the Project through in its entirety was the staff support available at both the area and central levels. Citizens had access to staff resource people who helped them to focus on their tasks. These staff provided technical and timely information, research, problem solving assistance, training, materials and secretarial help.

All of the encouragement in the world can't guarantee continued involvement from the same individuals. You should expect that as people's personal circumstances change, goals are met or the desire to move on to something else occurs, people will come and go from organizations.

[redacted]

23

TIPS: Keeping Volunteers

- Acknowledge their contributions, personally and publicly.
- Utilize all of their skills.
- Recognize their needs.
- Respond to their requests.
- Offer support and provide assistance.
- Appreciate their commitment.
- Give public recognition of their accomplishments.
- Take time to have fun.

Improving the Quality of Day Care:

What Citizens Can Do Locally

Chapter 5

Citizen involvement can resemble a disorganized road race in which the only thing the runners have in common is their interest in running. However, with a common knowledge of the course, a team spirit developed through training and a shared vision of the ideal pace, they can meet the challenge before them.

The success of a citizen network rests in the preparation and support of participants as well as in their successful completion of the tasks before them.

The success of a citizen network rests in the preparation and support of participants as well as in their successful completion of the tasks before them. It is important to note again that Council for Children participation in the Citizen Involvement Project was voluntary. We distributed an application encouraging all Councils throughout the state to respond. A selection committee chose 15 different Councils to participate in these activities. The Councils were located in three different geographic regions of the state—Western Massachusetts, the Greater Boston Region and Southeastern Massachusetts.

Local activities focussed on proposal review and program review, two of the legislative mandates of the Councils for Children which provide citizens with access to local children's programs. Proposal review is an activity whereby citizens make recommendations to the state as to how state dollars should be spent in local communities. In this case, citizens reviewed day care proposals and made site visits to day care providers. Recommendations regarding funding, which also commented on the services provided and ability of each provider, were then sent to the Department of Social Services.

Program review is local activity in which citizens conduct comprehensive reviews of the program services and operations and issue a report on their findings. In conducting program reviews, citizens read pertinent documents (annual reports, program philosophy and policies, parent handbooks), make site visits, interview the director and staff and survey parents. Their final report describes the provider and services, offers suggestions for improving the quality of care and commends the positive aspects of the program.

Proposal review, site visits, program review activities and the issuance of final reports all affect the quality of day care provided to children. Participation in such activities can also provide a vehicle for advocacy on state policies and funding levels.

Indicators of Quality

The cornerstone of the Citizen Involvement Project was its emphasis on quality day care. Initially, Project staff conducted research to gather current information on day care quality. Training sessions and accompanying materials presented elements common to quality day care, regardless of the setting or philosophy, as well as differences in approaches to early childhood education. The acknowledgement of philosophical differences and individual values in defining quality day care occurred through panel presentations, exercises in values clarification and group discussion. (See bibliography of materials on quality day care in Appendix A.)

What constitutes quality for parents may vary, based on their needs, values, cultural orientation and the needs of their child. Some parents want a home-like environment with just one or two other children. Family day care offers close interaction between the child and provider, nurturing for the children from one consistent adult and some peer interaction. Some want a larger group program which emphasizes social and peer interaction. Others look for numerous and trained staff to develop relationships with their children and prepare them for kindergarten.

Just as the needs of children and their families are different and parenting styles vary, there are also many different types of day care programs with different philosophies and approaches to meet those diverse needs. Center-based day care offers a different experience than does a family day care setting. Activities and daily schedules vary from program to program. The philosophy of a center or family day care home may focus on the social and emotional development of a child or it may emphasize the cognitive, educational development of the child. This variety allows families options (within the constraints of cost, location, hours, and availability of placements) for selecting the kind of care that best meets their needs.

While different philosophies and types of day care programs exist, there are some general standards and criteria by which the quality of these programs can be measured. Current research has documented common elements in quality day care programs. The indicators of quality day care that were discussed throughout the Project's training activities are reflected in the Summary of Research Findings by Professor Gwen Morgan, Wheelock College, Boston, Massachusetts (see box on next page).

Prescott and Jones, who have studied day care in one area of California for twenty years, have found the following characteristics of programs associated with quality:

- softness
- safety with daring
- privacy
- clarity and openness
- a variety of activities
- props for imaginative play
- opportunity to relate to children and adults of different ages and cultures
- love

Parents, when asked about quality, stress the need for safety, health procedures that diminish the spread of disease, and experienced staff (Rodes and Moore).

In 1983, a national early childhood professional organization, the National Association for the Education of Young Children, issued a draft document entitled, *Criteria for High Quality Early Childhood Programs* which defines standards for quality day care that exceed licensing and purchase standards. These criteria are comprehensive and address all components of a high quality early childhood program including: physical environment; health and safety; nutrition and food service; staff/child ratios and group size; staff qualifications and development; child-child interaction; curriculum; staff-child relationships; staff-parent interaction, and program evaluation.

In Massachusetts, the Office for Children's Licensing Regulations establish certain minimum standards that must be met by all day care programs. If a day care program receives state funds, it must meet

Research Findings:

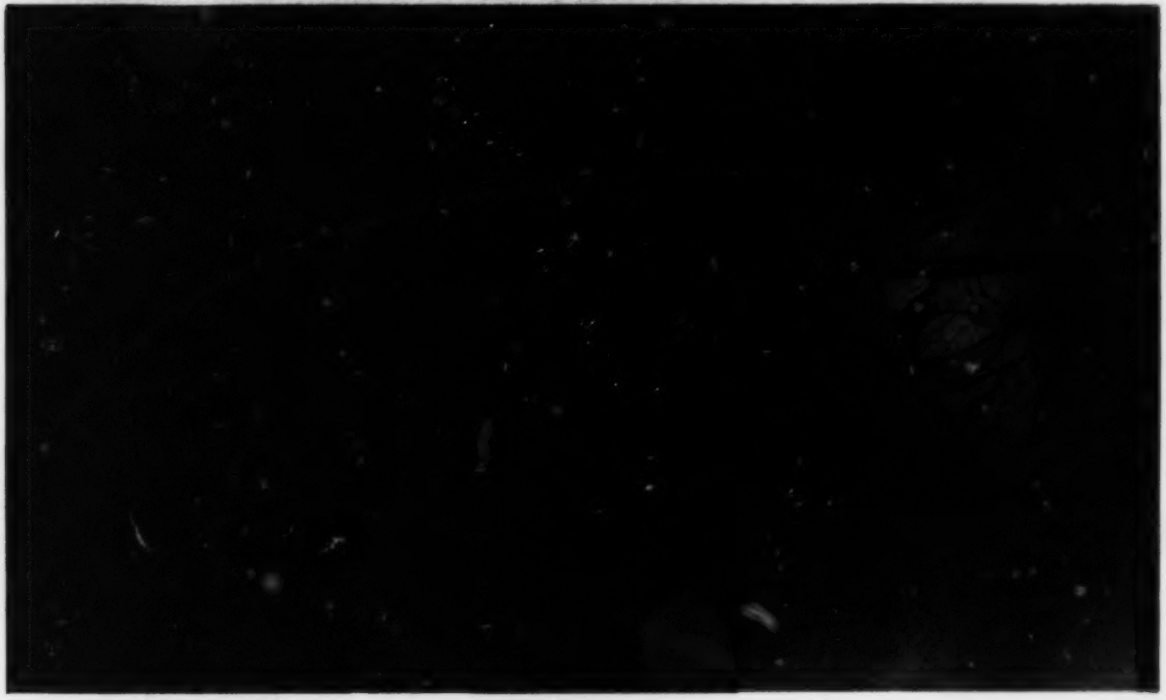
The Elements of Quality in Child Care

Gwen Morgan, Wheelock College

- Group size is important. Human scale of a group affects children's behavior significantly. Small groups work best (Ruopp, 1978).
- Training is important, both for centers and family day care. Lack of specialized training not only fails to have positive effects, it is even a cause for some concern about negative effects (Ruopp, 1978; Fosberg, 1981).
- Staff/child ratios are very significant for infant care, and somewhat important for center care, though less so than group size (Ruopp, 1978).
- Continuity of relationships is important (Clarke-Stewart, 1977). This factor can be disrupted by government policies, by moving children or by abruptly terminating their participation in programs. It is also related to staff turnover. One study (Fowler and Khan in Belsky, 1978) found indications that high caregiver turnover was associated with a sudden decline in children's IQ scores.
- The design of the environment is important. Programs designed to facilitate small-group activity are associated with positive outcomes; large spaces with many children in one group are associated with negative outcomes (Prescott, 1979).
- A shared relationship with parents is essential to positive outcomes (Fein, 1979; Shipman, 1976).
- Representational play has been found to be universally important in human development (Turner and Bradford, 1981). Programs should not deprive children of the right to play.
- The "match" of program to child needs is important. Different children thrive under different conditions, and it is important that there be a variety of options for parent choice and that parents be permitted such a choice (Clarke-Stewart, 1977).

additional standards established by the Department of Social Services. The day care purchasing standards in Massachusetts require specific services and policies of providers and established criteria for meeting these standards.

Each of these documents was utilized in the training and preparation of citizens and staff. A panel presentation on quality was included in the training. Perspectives on quality were offered by a parent, an OFC Licensor, a day care provider and a DSS representative. As noted by one OFC community representative, "The panel presentation on quality day care helped people focus their thoughts on what quality is versus the different philosophies and approaches to care." Training, information and discussion established a common ground among participants. Individual preferences and values were known and respected but were viewed in a different light. Citizens



agreed that the quality of day care could be improved without compromising parent choice or the diversity of programs.

Training: Developing the Team

As noted earlier, training was one of the major attractions of the project. Citizens and staff were eager to develop skills, refine current talents and explore new issues. Training was provided for each phase of local activity:

- Phase I in which citizens reviewed proposals, conducted site visits and made recommendations to the state as to how day care dollars should be spent in local communities; and
- Phase II in which citizens completed comprehensive reviews of local day care centers and issued a report of their findings.

Before undertaking any local activities, project staff met directly with each of the three regions involved in the Project. Our agenda was to assess the training needs of Council for Children members and staff; clarify expectations and responsibilities; identify timelines and schedules and review the draft design of training sessions. This process was essential because it allowed for direct communication and open discussion with participants regarding their levels of experience and skill as well as their unique circumstances.

TIPS: Identifying Indicators of Quality

- Gather current information, research and reports.
- Use your state's licensing requirements as a base.
- Familiarize yourself with the standards set by the state agency that purchases day care in your state.
- Present philosophical differences and various approaches to the group.
- Utilize the knowledge of experts and parents.
- Identify the values and personal opinions within your group.
- Develop a basic agreement within your group as to the common indicators of quality.

Phase I: Proposal Review Training

Three 3-hour evening sessions were conducted in each of the participating regions. These training sessions focussed on educating participants about the day care delivery system, elements of a proposal and how to assess those documents, identifying indicators of quality care and developing observational and group process skills. To maximize participation and interest, a variety of training methodologies were utilized, including: panel presentation, small group, mini- lectures, group discussion and role play.

Session I attempted to develop a basic level of understanding of the Project, the state day care system, proposal review and the role of citizens in that process. Session II was devoted to issues of quality day care and preparation for making site visits to local day care programs. Session III attempted to enhance knowledge of day care budgets, linking fiscal expenditures with quality issues. Preparation for writing recommendations was also included. Each session built in group experiences aimed at developing teams and leaders, increasing communication, practicing group decision-making and identifying personal value systems. Materials were distributed at each training session to assist citizens in conducting their proposal review activities.

Supplemental materials were distributed at each training session including: sample DSS recommendation forms and checklists for use during site visits (see Appendix B).

The overwhelming majority of participants found the training very useful and interesting. As one expressed it, "I didn't know too much about the language that's used in proposals. The training sessions were very helpful and good for me." For those who could not attend, additional training sessions were held, area staff met with people individually and some committee meetings devoted time to answering additional questions.

We evaluated training sessions by distributing evaluation forms at each training session. Additional comments were solicited in follow-up meetings with staff. We learned that:

- What works for one region of the state may not be replicable in another;
- Travel time affects participation even for the very interested;
- Too much material easily overwhelms participants; and
- It is a challenge to provide enough but not too much information.

TIPS: Training

- Involve participants in the design of training.
- Identify your audience and be clear about their initial level of skill.
- Be diverse. Use various techniques: small group experiences, panel presentations, individual exercises, group discussion and brainstorming are just a few.
- Acknowledge that all participants already have certain skills to offer.
- Make it an enjoyable experience. Set the tone.
- Be clear about what the training will and won't do. Articulate the goals of training.
- Connect all experiential activities (role play, values clarification) to the task at hand.
- Always provide refreshments.
- Solicit as much discussion and interaction among participants as is possible.
- Take risks before you expect participants to do so.
- Make training services accessible to participants: evenings or Saturdays, convenient locations.
- Keep to your scheduled time. If you need more time get the group's permission.
- Be flexible. Be willing to adjust your agenda if the needs of the group require you to do so.
- Don't expect to meet every need of every participant; do strive to meet some need for every participant and acknowledge that to the group.

Phase II: Program Review Training

From our experience we decided that a different model for the next stage of training (program review) would be more effective. We conducted training for OFC community representatives in each of the three participating regions. In turn, they provided training for Council for Children members in each of their areas.

This training-of-trainers model was developed because program review was a more complicated activity than proposal review. In addition, community representatives had expressed a strong desire expand their skills as trainers and this was an opportunity to respond to that need. Area-based training could be designed in response to the needs and schedules of a smaller group of participants and new procedures and materials needed to be incorporated into the training.

We designed and conducted these training sessions with the assistance of an OFC staff person whose responsibilities also included training on this topic. The training focussed on specific program review information as well as training design, methodology and group process. We conducted full-day and half-day training sessions in each of the participating regions. The second session was conducted after community representatives provided initial training and teams had initiated their program review activities. Two sessions were scheduled for a variety of reasons. First, content became more relevant once citizen activities had begun. This strategy also helped us avoid overwhelming staff and served as an opportunity for additional technical assistance.

The initial training session enhanced the training abilities of participants, offered models of training styles and techniques and provided participants with an oportunity to practice their skills as a trainer. Information on program review, OFC procedures, required activities and scheduling were topics covered in this session. The follow-up session focussed on group process issues and report writing. Trainers were exposed to exercises that addressed the various roles individuals play in a group situation and group decision-making techniques (e.g. consensus, majority voting). In each session, ample time was allocated for participant discussion and problem solving. A training manual was also developed and distributed.

This training was very successful because OFC community representatives, the link for making it all happen locally, were prepared and energized. The training-of-trainers approach incorporated a great deal of peer support and, for the first time, encouraged staff to identify themselves as experienced trainers. Follow-up and technical assistance provided community representatives with further assistance in tailoring their training to the needs of the citizen committees in their areas.

Influencing the Spending of State Day Care Dollars: Proposal Review

The goal of proposal review is to give local citizens a voice in determining how state dollars are spent on children's services, in our case on day care services. In 1984, citizen teams involved in the Project conducted site visits to 60 day care centers throughout Massachusetts and reviewed 75 requests for state funds. The teams discussed the merits of each proposal and results of their site visits. They arrived at a consensus with fellow committee members on the recommendations they would make to the Department of Social Services regarding the spending of over $7.5 million in state day care services for approximately 2000 infants, toddlers and pre-schoolers from communities across the state.

Committee members organized into teams and selected four centers they would visit. With the assistance of OFC community representatives, teams developed a work plan and timeline for completion of their upcoming activities.

Proposal review is a serious responsibility and was treated as such by citizens. It was viewed as a way to support local programs and at the same time to ensure the quality of state-funded services. Overall, teams were quite satisfied with the quality of day care services they reviewed. All of the 60 centers visited were recommended for funding and in only nine cases were recommendations conditioned on the correction of services problems prior to funding. Even in situations where serious concerns were expressed, team members responded initially with offers of assistance to correct the problems as opposed to quickly recommending that funds be withheld. Team members were sensitive to the shortage of resources in programs that were attempting to keep parent fees reasonable, the time required to correct licensing violations, and the effects that a disruption in services would have on children and their families.

Conflict of Interest

Providers of center-based day care services (directors, head teachers, assistant teachers) and members of the board of directors were not allowed to participate in proposal review activities due to a potential conflict of interest. Relatives, spouses and partners were also excluded. For example, centers could be competing for the same funds or staff could have very strong allegiances to particular philosophies or past experiences. Even if the appearance of a conflict was remote, participation was restricted. This restriction is required by Massachusetts state law. We go beyond the law to prevent the appearance of a conflict in order to preserve the integrity of the citizen review process.

Site Visits

Usually lasting at least two hours, site visits were conducted by teams of two to four people. This allowed for a sharing of perspectives and the number was small enough to minimize the disruption of center activities. Teams identified roles for each member (leader, interviewer, timekeeper) prior to making the site visit. OFC staff members were not allowed to go on site visits but played important supportive roles as assistants, trainers, problem-solvers and resource providers. This policy protected the integrity of the review process and enabled citizens to control their activities. As noted by one community representative, "Keeping staff out of site visits had a very positive effect. It empowered citizens."

While on sites the review team members met with the agency or center director; toured the center and its outside space; observed activities in a classroom for at least one hour; spoke with the head teacher or appropriate staff; and, met again with the director to ask questions and express thanks.

Site visits enabled citizen teams to observe first hand the interaction between staff and children, the daily activities of the center, the physical design, equipment and materials and staff interaction with each other and with parents. Checklists were used as guides during the site visit (see Appendix B). As soon after the visit as possible, teams met to develop a team opinion.

This information was then utilized as citizens reviewed specific proposals for funding. This allowed the document to be reviewed based on citizens' personal observations of the operations of these centers.

As one Council for Children member notes, "The site visits were very helpful. Sometimes people can write very nice proposals but it doesn't mean their program is the same. The site visit enabled us to see the reality of the programs."

Reviewing Proposals: Methodology

Proposals were reviewed with the assistance of a questionnaire developed by the Citizen Involvement for staff. Major areas under review included:

- The organization and ability of the applicant agency;
- The needs of the population to be served;
- Stated goals and objectives;
- The description of the proposed services;
- Daily operations of the program including classroom schedules and menus;
- Staff responsibilities, and training opportunities;
- Policies and procedures;
- Role(s) of parents in center operations; and
- Budget items, particularly salary scales, classroom equipment and supplies.

At the end of the 30-day review period, citizen teams sent funding recommendations to the Department of Social Services. A sampling of recommendation forms reveals the following comments from citizen teams:

The committee recommends strengthening the parent involvement component through the implementation of a Parents' Advisory Committee and regularly scheduled family events.

Staff had a genuine, caring relationship with children and had a variety of activities and equipment available for each age group.

We recommend that a more distinct "quiet" space be available for toddlers.

The committee recommends that the Department of Social Services fund this program at a level of $6,000 higher than last year to allow this program to pay the $6,000 in rent which it is being charged for the first time. The Committee strongly feels that this $6,000 should

TIPS: Conducting Site Visits

- Notify the center and make arrangements far enough in advance.
- Always go with at least one other person.
- Be prepared. Know where you are going, what you want to see and who is responsible for what tasks. Be on time. Have a spokesperson.
- Bring what you'll need for the site visit—pencils, paper, clipboard, your checklist, guidelines from the center.
- Dress appropriately. Don't wear your "best" clothes to a day care center.
- Keep to your agreed upon schedule. You (and the center staff) have limited time.
- Visit when activities are taking place—when you'll be able to observe various types of interaction.
- Observe the activities in the classroom. Take notes and use your checklist.
- Resist the temptation to interact with the children. Remain objective.
- Take notes during your visit. Don't trust your memory. Collect available documents.
- Follow a systematic approach when visiting a center.
- Always ask questions and get explanations. Don't make assumptions.
- Balance good rapport and trust with objectivity.
- Watch out for the "halo effect"—allowing your perception of one aspect/activity influence your perception of another.
- Thank the director and staff before leaving.
- Discuss your perceptions and comments with your team members AFTER leaving the center.

not come from the cost of living increase which is expected with passage of the state budget next year but should be in addition to this increase.

The toddler program appeared to be creative and attractive to participants... toddlers were engaged with each other and staff.

A major concern is the lack of fencing between the parking lot and the playground, which are in close proximity.

We recommend ongoing training for staff in child abuse and neglect issues and a change in the policy regarding institutional abuse to allow the reporting of a suspected staff to the DSS.

The committee recommends supplementing current daily activities by bringing in community resources like the Foster Grandparent Program.

Two examples are offered to illustrate how citizens used their observations and their role in the review process to improve the quality of state funded day care services.

Example A

On site visits, citizen teams toured the inside of each facility and the surrounding grounds which included the children's playground. During one visit, team members noted the typical outdoor equipment—swing set, sandbox, and climber. In addition, this playground also had a wooden treehouse which had a platform that was built about eight feet off the ground.

Committee members were concerned that even if staff constantly supervised the children as they played in the treehouse, a child could easily slip and fall from the platform. The committee recommended the

state funding be continued only if the platform were fenced in. The committee also notified the OFC licensor of the situation.

Upon receipt of the recommendations, the agency director quickly informed the team of his intent to comply. Two weeks later, this director contacted the community representative and let her know that "repairs were completed and children will not be allowed to use the treehouse until the OFC Licensor gives the green light after checking the work."

Example B Another citizens' team identified a series of concerns regarding the age appropriateness of curriculum, small number of daily activities, tone of voice used by staff when speaking to children, physical space and limitations in parent involvement. After reviewing previous years' recommendation forms, team members noted that similar concerns had also been expressed by those citizens and that the recommended changes had not yet occurred.

The committee reported their concerns and recommended changes to the Department of Social Services contract manager and the OFC licensor. Continued funding was recommended on a three- month basis on the condition that further monitoring occur.

After submitting their recommendations, committee members worked with the center director, DSS and OFC over the next six months. Agreement among the parties was not easily reached and recommended changes were not implemented quickly. Despite these problems and accompanying frustrations, team members continued in their efforts and initiated their program review activities, which required a more in-depth review of the center.

TIPS:

- Determine your state's purchase of service system and timelines.
- Identify existing advisory boards and their functions.
- Develop relationships with staff in the state purchasing agency and licensing agency as well as with day care providers.
- Explore the existing mechanism for review of proposals and current opportunities for citizen involvement, if any exist.
- If an opportunity does not exist, draft a plan for citizen involvement in the review process, which would include a purpose and objectives, procedures, assignment of responsibilities, and schedule.
- Articulate the advantages of citizen review in your proposed plan.
- Cultivate a base of support.
- Solicit comments on your plan from your supporters.
- Present the plan to the state purchasing agency.
- Negotiate a written agreement outlining the details for citizen review of proposals. Include roles, responsibilities and expectations of all parties, timelines, arbitration of disagreements, information sharing and a process for revision and negotiation.
- Implement your plan and good luck!

Proposal review and site visits are ways in which citizens can influence the quality of state-funded day care. A positive, supportive approach with day care providers is essential. Citizens should be prepared and willing to work. Change does take time but results will occur if citizens remain involved.

Affecting Quality: Program Review

Program reviews are general non-intensive reviews of a children's program and its components, with a focus on the overall program operation and services provided. The purposes for conducting a program review are varied:

- To gain an overview of the program;
- To develop relationships with local providers of children's services;
- To gather information and then provide community education;
- To assess the program against its stated goals; and
- To assess the program's services in relation to current community needs.

Program reviews can be complex and time-consuming activities but they can accomplish a great deal. Under the Citizen Involvement Project, citizen teams conducted thorough reviews of over 25 different day care centers, focussing on improving the quality of local state-funded day care services. Teams issued reports which described the operations of each center, explained their review activities and presented their findings and suggestions for improvement.

State Council for Children members offered the following remarks:

This was a good project to get into...it brings up the quality of centers. New eyes can find things, even little problems, and offer suggestions that staff may not even think about.

The importance of day care is to bring family and community together. This project facilitated that. It built a community awareness and gave the community some control. We can see what's going on in centers and be responsible for writing reports and recommending improvements in quality.

Monitoring and making the results of your review a public document provides assistance to parents shopping for day care.

This project gave me a chance to get to know people in my community and I got to know the centers well. We worked hard together but we had fun, too.

Procedures for Conducting Program Reviews

In order to simplify the Program Review we followed existing OFC procedures, which presented requirements as well as suggesting options for completing the process. Important issues to address in procedures include:

- Philosophy of citizen involvement and purpose of review activities;
- Roles and responsibilities of citizens, staff and sponsoring agency;
- Benefits to the individual programs being reviewed and the community as a whole;
- Specific requirements of volunteers including a conflict of interest statement and description of mandatory training;
- Policies outlining team responsibilities such as notifying providers, rights of the provider, response of team if they observe a child in danger, confidentiality and conflict of interest;
- Procedures that explain how to: follow each of the policies, select programs and conduct program review activities;
- Sample report outlines and instruments to use in conducting activities; and
- Information on the service being reviewed including licensing requirements and quality indicators.

Activities

Citizen teams conducted activities to obtain information and feedback from all parties involved in the day care centers including parents, staff and boards of directors. In the course of completing the program review, teams:

- Interviewed the center director twice, in the beginning and at the end of the process;
- Interviewed a representative sampling of other staff (head teachers, assistant teachers, cooks, social service staff);
- Conducted site visits to observe classroom activities at varying times in the day;

- Surveyed parents and staff through written questionnaires, and interviews; and
- Examined relevant documents (e.g., annual report, parent handbook, previous proposals).

Tools

Tools were designed to assist local efforts and give citizens a base upon which to build:

- A sample letter to the provider initiating the process;
- A fact sheet on program review defining its purpose, aspects of the program to review and process for conducting the reviews;
- Interview questions for the center director;
- Checklist for the site visit;
- Questionnaires for parents, staff and board of director members; and
- An outline for writing the program review report.

Teams were encouraged to adapt these tools to reflect particular concerns or unique community characteristics and needs. This ensured that citizens remained in control of their activities. As one OFC community representative said, "Without the tools, it would have been a totally different experience. We'd still be meeting to talk about what to do. Citizens would be burnt out before even going to a center."

Affecting Quality

Final program review reports vary just as citizens, communities and day care centers vary. Some provide extensive detail on all aspects of the center while others focus primarily on problems. An important component of all the reports is their recommendations for improving the quality of services provided in day care centers.

Predominant areas of concern included:

- Parent involvement and other policies (personnel, sick child, first aid);
- Adequate space and design of physical environment;
- Continuity of staff, wage scale, benefit level, and training opportunities;
- Equipment and supplies; and
- Integration of the program within the community.

Program review reports became public documents once they were approved by local committees and OFC. Teams distributed reports to interested community agencies, the Department of Social Services and OFC Licensors. Reports are now being used to provide extensive information to citizens as they begin a new cycle of proposal review activities. Teams are planning additional site visits which will serve as a mechanism for monitoring and follow-up of the day care centers.

Example A

One citizen team reviewed a center that they found to be of high quality. Their report described classrooms where staff frequently interacted with children with kindness, concern and support and with a variety of activity areas, age-appropriate materials and equipment in good condition. In describing the staff and program, the team noted in their final report, "Three of the teachers have college degrees... In addition, in-service training is available for teachers in the form of ten monthly workshops related to early childhood taught by consultants from nearby colleges. Topics are requested by teachers. Interactions in classrooms are comfortable. Staff interacted frequently with children with kindness, support and concern. In arrivals and departures of children there was parent/staff interaction, even if it was brief." Data collected included parent comments on the positive aspects of the program which included support for children's individual needs, encouragement of parent input and participation and communication between staff and parents.

The conclusions and recommendations outlined in their program review report state, "The great strength of the program is its teachers who act on the realization that each child is part of a family unit. Teacher training, dedication to their work, quality interaction with parents and with each other is evident upon observation. Parents have the highest regard for the center."

Example B In this review, the citizen team had many concerns and spent a great deal of time working with the program during their proposal review activities. The recommendation regarding funding outlined concerns regarding playground safety issues broken and scarce equipment, appropriateness of curriculum for different age groups staff-child interaction parents' access to classroom and limited educational planning.

After completing extensive program review activities and regular meetings with the director and Department of Social Services staff, the team issued their final report. The citizen team's final report reflects the

TIPS: Citizens Conducting Program Reviews

- Think of your activities as a support to programs.
- Give at least two weeks notification to programs.
- Be prepared for each activity.
- Use questionnaires and other tools.
- Survey staff and parents anonymously.
- Invite parents to be interviewed.
- Always ask whatever questions you have.
- Be sensitive to the program needs as well as its financial limitations.
- Visit at different times during the day to get a more comprehensive picture of the center.
- Keep information confidential until report is approved.
- Acknowledge positive aspects of program.
- Offer positive suggestions—don't just criticize.
- Allow the director to review the draft report first.

fruits of their efforts. As the cover letter to their report explains, "The Review Team was encouraged by the new Director's willingness to make needed changes and the progress made to date on the recommendations outlined in the report. The Council for Children views the center's plans for expansion of their building as an opportunity to create a quality environment."

The team recommended that parents be surveyed to determine the best methods for involving them in the program and suggested evening parent meetings, with child care provided, along with regularly scheduled parent-teacher meetings. In the letter responding to the team's report, the agency director stated that, "Since parents have expressed an interest in formal meetings with teachers we will send questionnaires to determine what would be most convenient for them. I would like to thank the review team for their comments and recommendations. We have found them to be very helpful."

Employer-Supported Child Care:

What Can Citizens Do?

Chapter 6

In 1978, there were approximately 100 employers nationally who provided child care assistance to their employees. Massachusetts companies like Stride-Rite and Polaroid were among the leaders. By 1980 that figure had quadrupled, and by 1985 there were over 1800 companies providing some form of child care assistance. Over 60 of these companies are from Massachusetts; they include a range of industrial firms along with hospitals and universities.

> **I got involved because it was something to solve a problem, a solution rather than going over the problem again.**
>
> *—Volunteer chair, Lynn Employer-Supported Day Care Committee, North Shore*

Employer support for child care is one piece of a large funding tapestry, woven of federal, state and local dollar, voluntary resources and support from the private sector. Business cannot do it all, nor can government. Together they can begin to meet the growing needs for more child care services.

What are the child care options for employers? Employers can provide child care assistance within the company or within the community generally. Within the company, employers can support on- or near-site centers, or networks of in-home or family day care. They can support after-school programs or child care resource and referral services which help parents find care and work to develop new child care resources where needed. Employers can also develop personnel policies which are sensitive to parenting needs such as flextime, maternity and paternity leave and time off for a sick child.

Within the community, employers can provide funding to an individual program or to a general child care fund which may in turn fund programs. Employers can issue coupons, or vouchers, to employees that will purchase care in a community-based program or reserve spaces in a program for their employees, perhaps at a discounted cost. Or employers can purchase resource and referral services from a community-based agency for their employees.

In addition, there are tax provisions which allow employers to deduct the cost of funding child care for their employees. These include the Dependent Care Assistance Plan (DCAP) in which employers help pay for employees' work-related dependent care costs either by providing the care directly, paying the provider, or reimbursing the employee. In addition to being tax-deductible for the employer, the cost of care is non-taxable for the employee.

Employers can also deduct the costs of providing a flexible benefit plan for their employees, which include day care as an optional benefit. Or they can provide assistance to their employees in claiming a child care tax credit on their federal income taxes.

The options are not mutually exclusive. For example, a voucher program is more effective when administered in conjunction with a resource and referral service. A company which starts an on-site center might find it desirable to add a family day care system or a resource and referral service, or both, in order to serve employees unable to bring their children to the work site.

What can citizens do at the community level to encourage employer support for child care? Who are their current and potential allies? And what channels must they work through to influence employers in their communities?

What can citizens do at the community level to encourage employer support for child care? Who are their current and potential allies? And what channels must they work through to influence employers in their communities?

The Citizen Involvement Project started with the basic notion that a community-based effort could play a vital role in encouraging local employers to address employee and community child care needs. Our first steps were to:

- Develop a small resource library on employer-supported child care, which explored the many ways in which employers can provide child care assistance, including major books, articles and videos; and
- Survey all 43 Councils for Children to assess the current "state of the art" of employer-supported child care, and what current efforts were in process to develop employer involvement.

What we discovered was that very little activity of this nature was going on, although the need for employer involvement in child care was certainly there.

Our goal was to develop employer-supported day care committees of the local Councils for Children which would:

- Assess the need for increased day care in their community;
- Identify the "players" who had a stake in increasing the supply of day care; and
- Build a coalition in each community to encourage employer support.

Ultimately, we hoped to see tangible results. The Project provided intensive training to selected committees on employer-supported day care issues, with follow-up technical assistance once committees began to define their strategies, develop broader networks and take action.

We worked with four pilot areas throughout Massachusetts, following a site selection process in which all Councils for Children were invited to apply.

Our selection criteria included interest and commitment (with at least one person pledging to see the project through); prior involvement in day care advocacy; and potential for employer involvement in the area. We also wanted a range of community types (e.g., city vs. rural).

The first task of each committee, was to recruit new volunteers. The main techniques used for recruitment were letters and follow-up phone contact with unions, business, day care advocacy groups, women's groups, community organizations, Chambers of Commerce and municipal associations.

We also issued press releases to describe the project. A sample follows:

Volunteers Needed for Federally-Funded Day Care Project

Does Massachusetts need more day care? YES!

Do you see the need for more day care services in your community? Do you want to do something about it? A two-year, federally-funded project, operating within the state's Office for Children, is looking for volunteer citizens throughout the state to encourage the involvement of employers—including business, local government and industry to meet the child care needs of their employees and their communities.

The federal project, called the "Citizen Involvement Project," includes training on the history and current status of employer-supported child care and the range of options employers can choose.

Coalitions of citizen volunteers, with technical assistance from Office for Children staff, will develop a strategy to involve a local employer in child care for its employees or for the community. Development and implementation of the strategy will occur over the year. Meetings will be held at times convenient for Coalition participants.

Citizens who either live or work in the following towns are invited to participate: Arlington, Burlington, Lexington, Wilmington, Winchester, Woburn, Lynn, Swampscott, Nahant, Saugus, Lynnfield, Salem, Peabody, Marblehead, Dover, Middleton, Lawrence, Andover, Methuen, Springfield, East Longmeadow, Longmeadow, Hampden and Wilbraham.

The training will be Wednesday, September 19 and all day Saturday, September 29. Location will be announced.

If you, your colleagues or neighbors are interested in getting involved, please call Matty Bloom at the Mystic Valley Council for Children in Winchester, 729-4350.

Comments from several Office for Children community representatives who took part in this aspect of the Project help to flesh out the picture of recruitment:

We put articles in the local papers and got a big response. People who called were excited about the idea of employer-supported day care in their area. They sensed the pulse of things in child care. People saw employers doing something about their employees' child care need and they asked, "Why isn't this happening closer to home?" They wanted to do something about it.

I sent out a couple of press releases and we used the listings in the freebee newspaper, as well as our newsletter. People always called. They all came cold. I would put out our newsletter in libraries. The word child care would jump out at people's faces and they would call! They came because of the child care issue. Basically, people were glad *there was this initiative. They were having trouble finding child care or they wanted to improve the child care situation. I also called a hospital group that had begun some activity. That was a breeze (for recruiting new members)!*

People got involved because of the need, the need of wanting to improve day care. I contacted people on an individual level first. I sought out those individuals who have a vested interest in day care. Then I spread out to organizations. For example, the Chamber of Commerce had a day care committee. It had not gone too far with it so it was perfect timing when I contacted them. They were looking for a way to get involved with day care and we wanted to connect with business.

Training

We planned two separate training programs: one for four area committees in neighboring geographic areas, and another for one area committee located in another part of the state. In designing the training and soliciting feedback, we wanted to account for differences in geography, population, types of employers located in the area and size of the training group.

Following a presentation of our draft plan, we reworked our design to incorporate feedback we had received.

The training on employer-supported day care was split into two sessions: one half-day and one full-day. Our goal was to develop the knowledge base and skills of the employer-supported day care committees so they could, in turn, develop a sound strategy for encouraging employers. In the first session, our goal was to begin developing group cohesion as well as to equip participants with a basic level of knowledge about employer-supported child care. Initially, we presented the goals of the Project: to create community-based coalitions that could stimulate employer involvement in child care. Our format for the session varied from showing a video about the types of available child care to presentations on the history of employer involvement and the role of day care as a support to working parents.

In our second session, our goal was to provide a comprehensive overview of all the child care options available to employers as well as how to approach marketing child care. We again varied our format with presentations as well as small-and large-group discussion to weigh the pros and cons of each option.

Training Packet

Written materials are crucial because they last beyond the training and reinforce what participants learned in the sessions. Our training packet included:

- Fact sheets;
- Indicators of quality in day care;
- Population and labor market trends pointing to an increased need for day care;
- Benefits to employers for responding to child care needs of employees and community;
- Glossary of day care terminology;

TIPS: Successful Training

- Ask yourself: *Who is your audience? What is your objective? What do you want the participants to learn? What is the best method to communicate that information?*
- Recognize each participant as a valuable contributor to the group.
- Keep discussion groups small (2-4 members).
- Try to facilitate interaction, the sharing of ideas, a sense of belonging, and a feeling of common purpose. Draw upon resources within the group for presentations and bring in outside experts.
- Use visual aids when making a presentation; use videos or film, if available and appropriate.
- Vary the format: presentations, small and large group discussions, "brainstorming" in problem-solving sessions, "mapping" out a concept in visual terms, film or video, role plays, panel discussions, breaks, and food!
- Allow time for discussion and feedback.
- Provide written materials that both reinforce and complement the training. (See Appendix B.)
- Involve participants in the setting and cleaning-up, food preparation, and other logistics.
- Keep your schedule flexible; if people seem tired, take a break. Balance flexibility and completing your tasks.
- Allow time for participants to fill out a very simple evaluation form.
- Put yourself in the trainees' place: If you were a participant in the training you've designed, would you enjoy it? Would you learn from it? Would you be moved to take another step towards action as a result of the training?

- Child care options for employers;
- Profiles of companies which provide some type of child care benefit;
- Cost-benefit figures supporting employer involvement in child care;
- National and state surveys of employer involvement;
- Sample survey to assess employee need; and
- *Child Care Matters at the Workplace*, by Dana Friedman.

The work really began after the training when the committees, fueled with basic information, designed strategies for their particular communities.

The Project staff was available to provide technical assistance to the committees, including a supportive ear, additional training on coalition-building and leadership development and referrals to experts such as tax or marketing consultants.

What Have the Committees Done?

Lynn Employer-Supported Day Care Committee

"We needed to do a lot of community work. We had to lift the reputation of day care for providers and consumers before we could go to employers," states the chair of the Lynn Employer-Supported Day Care Committee. "Lynn is a working class town. There is a crying need for day care, but the people who need it feel guilty, and the community as a whole is not aware of day care."

Based on their experience living and working in the Lynn community, the Lynn Employer-Supported Day Care (ESDC)

Committee knew they had to start gradually, first raising the level of public awareness about day care and reaching out to support the existing day care providers. Despite the general lack of public awareness and acceptance of day care, the need was apparent.

While investigating community resources the committee discovered two major activities already working to encourage employer-supported day care. One was a private agency, Job Opportunities, Inc. (JOI) which provides job training and placement to welfare recipients. JOI had identified day care as the key to stable job placement for their clients and was beginning to develop an overall plan to start a day care center which would serve their own clients and employees from nearby small companies.

The second activity involved the Women's Committee of a local union at General Electric. The Women's Committee had been working for years to convince the union and management to respond to workers' child care needs without success.

The committee decided to focus on supporting these efforts and recruited key organizers from each project to facilitate that process.

Consequently, two very different paths for eliciting employer involvement came together at committee meetings. "The Women's Committee needed support to keep fighting," stated a volunteer. "They had created a subcommittee on day care which surveyed GE employees, proving that there was an overwhelming need for day care. A proposal was developed for the creation of an on-site or near-site day care center and a family day care system. They had problems convincing their own union, especially the men, to pressure management on the day care issue."

The Women's Committee turned to the ESDC Committee for encouragement, back-up statistical material and help with developing a strategy.

In contrast, JOI Day Care Project was well on its way when the ESDC Committee was created. "Our member from JOI came to share a lot and show that it could be done."

Gradually, the Committee branched out into the community, in addition to giving support to current activities. It began to set up literature tables at community events sponsored by women's and human services advocacy groups. The committee initiated the development of a family day care network for over 50 providers in the Lynn area, and it developed an updated list of day care providers which General Electric made available through its Employee Assistance Program.

"Now the Committee is ready to take on a new employer-supported day care project," stated the volunteer chair of the ESDC Committee. First we supported the JOI day care center project and the Women's Committee and we started the Provider Association. Maybe the Community College should be next." They had a center planned, and an early childhood person in the college was pushing for day care when the plan was scrapped. If she could soften the President..."

Heritage Employer-Supported Day Care Committee

"This model is so empowering," stated a volunteer committee member. "The training gave me the knowledge to call a local businessman, as a volunteer, to say 'you're in a situation that's ripe for including a day care center in your building. I have this information to share with you. Before September I couldn't do this!"

The Heritage Council is located on the North Shore, covering a fairly broad area. While there are a few large companies, smaller companies predominate.

The Heritage Employer-Supported Day Care Committee was diverse in its membership, reflecting the diversity of the area with membership from unions, a major hospital and academia.

The committee defined two major focal points for their activity. First, they developed a directory of all licensed day care centers and nursery schools in the area, which was printed at no expense by a local business, GTE Sylvania, where one of their members is an employee. The committee then did a large mailing to employers which included the directory and a copy of *Child Care Matters at the Workplace*, a booklet written by Dana Friedman that describes child care options for employers and provides a comprehensive list of Massachusetts employer-supported day care.

Their second activity was to "take their show on the road," as stated by a committee member. "After we were trained, we trained new members of our committee, and then we practiced our presentation on the Council for Children. We got critical feedback, picked up some poiniers and just practiced some more."

The committee first took their "show" to an organization of women in business. "We used a shotgun approach, providing a brief half-hour overview of the issues," continued the committee member. "Sixty women attended the breakfast, and they were very responsive!"

The presentation was divided into three speakers who discussed the need for child care and how the low supply affects the workforce, child care options for employers, and quality child care issues. Back-up written material was available.

Energized by this success, the committee went to other organizations like the Kiwanis and Rotary Clubs. "The Kiwanis Club is a male audience," stated the Heritage Community Representative. "I was amazed how interested they were. The men are from small businesses, and they were really concerned about problems like high turnover. We outlined the need and the options. We stressed flexible benefits, personnel policies and information and referral. We used our directory as an opener. Once I and R opens the door, they'll see there's not enough out there."

The committee often looked to individual contacts for its direction. An aide of the local congressman is on their committee, and they are now discussing a jointly sponsored forum with his office and the local Chamber of Commerce. Because a GTE Sylvania employee is a member of the committee, the company has been sensitized to the child care needs of its employees, as witnessed by their printing of the child care directory. In addition, the National Teamsters Union, which represents GTE workers, has made child care a priority. The committee now has plans to submit a proposal to the local Teamsters union, using the Lynn GE Women's Committee's proposal as a model.

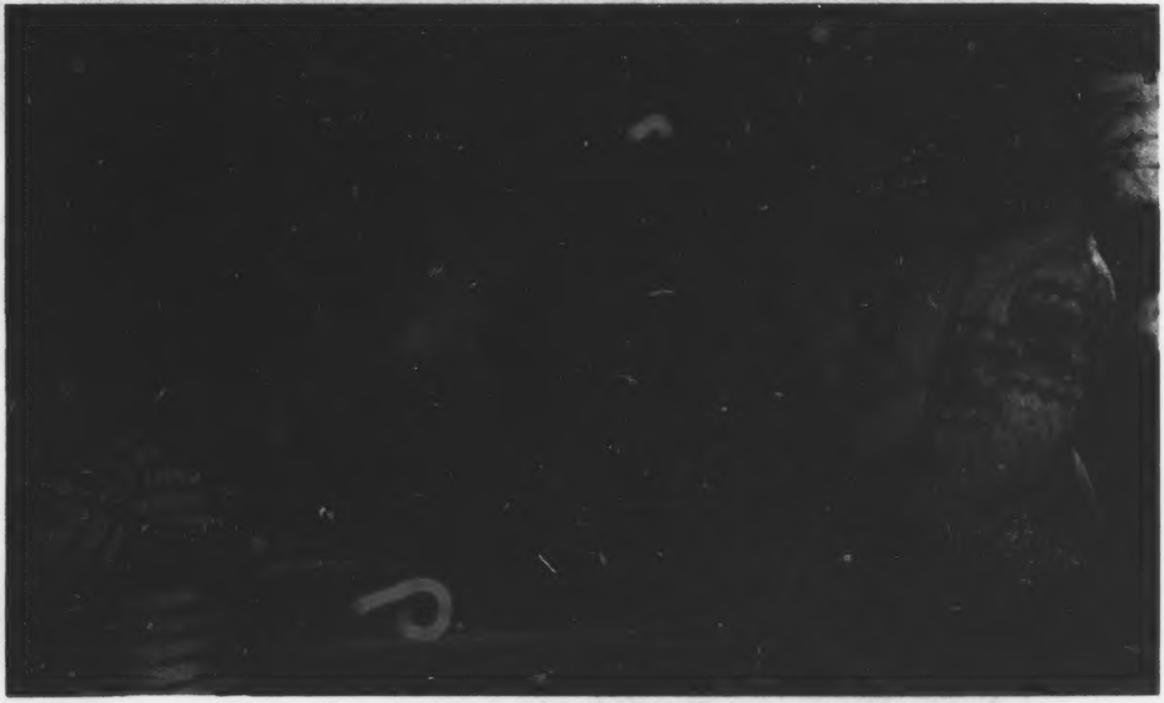
"We have bits and pieces. It's just a matter of time, but everybody's ready," stated the Heritage Community Representative. "This is the Council's most exciting committee."

Mystic Valley Employer-Supported Day Care Committee

"Our committee decided, in its birth pangs, to try to reach a number of employers in the area," stated the volunteer chair of the committee.

In its planning stages, the committee discovered that the local congressman, Representative Edward Markey, was planning an employer-supported day care forum in conjunction with the Executive Office of Economic Affairs. The committee immediately formalized a connection with representatives from both offices, offering their support and expertise. Representatives from Representative Markey's office and Economic Affairs were invited to committee meetings to present their plan for the forum, and ultimately the committee joined forces in organizing a breakfast for Chief Executive Officers (CEO's) of businesses in the Burlington area. "The collaboration has worked very well," noted the committee chair. "The Secretary of Economic Affairs calling a CEO provides an opportunity to have a forum reach more people than we can reach on our own."

In addition, Representative Markey's office sent invitations to over 500 employers and others who may have a special interest. At the forum, Markey described why his office was concerned with the issue, and the Secretary of Economic Affairs briefly identified child care options for employers. The breakfast was donated, and the forum was held at the local Holiday Inn. Following the breakfast, the CEO's were taken on a site visit to a local day care center, organized by the committee. "Markey identified employer-supported day care as an issue," said another committee member, "and we landed on it, taking an active role in pulling things together."



52

Following the initial breakfast, the committee held a follow-up forum, consisting of a two-hour panel with time for questions and answers. The panelists included corporate experts on resource and referral, voucher day care, on-site day care and flexible benefits.

The Governor's Day Care Policy staff person spoke about the role of the state as a model employer and as a facilitator for encouraging employer involvement in child care. "I've learned a lot out of this experience," stated a committee member. "The collaboration of a citizen group and government really works."

Springfield Employer-Supported Day Care Committee

"Our goal is to get people interested in looking at employer-supported day care as an option, and to introduce people who are doing it," stated the Springfield community representative.

The Springfield Committee has made contacts with local banks, the Women's Division of the Chamber of Commerce, and with Ring Nursing Home Day Care Center, a local company which subsidizes 40-50% of the child care costs of its employees in its on-site center. The committee has planned a co-sponsored event with this business in an attempt to "open the door a little wider" for employer-supported child care. In addition, the local IRS has agreed to provide consultation on tax questions related to employer-supported day care.

What Next?

All of the committees are off to a strong start. Through training, follow-up technical assistance and experience, they have become more knowledgeable about employer-supported day care. By developing broader contacts with key leaders in their communities, they are able to assess which employers may perceive a need to consider child care as an option. In collaborating with government, legislators, business, and labor, they have made significant progress in reaching employers in their respective areas.

It is still too early to predict the outcome of the committee's activities. Experience tells us that it often takes two years from start to finish to develop an employer-supported day care program. Nonetheless, as one committee member stated, "People have a sense of power and purpose." It is this kind of energy and commitment which can see a project through to a successful outcome.

Revising Quality Standards for State-Funded Day Care

Chapter 7

For ten months a 35-member Advisory Committee discussed, defined, disagreed and ultimately agreed on recommendations for changes in the Department of Social Services, (DSS) standards for purchasing center-based day care programs. The committee was organized by the Citizen Involvement Project. The very nature of the task posed a challenge: The Office for Children (OFC), which licenses all day care centers in Massachusetts, was advising the Department of Social Services (DSS), which purchases care in roughly one-third of those centers, to change its standards for determining which programs receive state contracts.

> **I am pleased to share with you that the Department feels uniformly positive toward the final recommendations submitted by the Statewide Advisory Committee to the Citizen Involvement for Day Care Quality Project. The recommended revisions reflect a great deal of effort as well as a sensitivity to the complexities of the Commonwealth's day care delivery system and the role DSS plays in that system.**
>
> **The Support Resources staff will now begin the process of incorporating your recommendations into the body of the DSS Day Care Purchase Standards, so that they may impact the FY'86 open and competitive bid process for day care services, to begin early this winter.**
>
> *Commissioner of Massachusetts Department of Social Services (DSS)*

Acknowledging this potential conflict, we sought to build a coalition of informed task force members who represented a variety of constituencies, including DSS itself. We tried to keep a clear focus on our shared vision—to improve the quality of state-funded day care in Massachusetts—while avoiding turf battles.

In order to facilitate a positive working relationship with DSS, we established an initial rapport which grew throughout the life of the advisory committee.

In Massachusetts, the OFC licensing regulations set the minimum standard for quality, addressing a full range of issues including health and safety, program requirements, staff/child ratio and group size, and staff qualifications. States Professor Gwen Morgan, "Minimum means 'at least' and does not necessarily imply 'low.' Licensing regulations are the consumer protection program for all children and parents. They are the state's attempt to assure a level of quality for all children."

The DSS Purchase Standards require all day care centers to meet OFC's standards and define the contractual relationship between a day care provider and DSS. These standards call for more stringent staff/child ratios for pre-schoolers than OFC's licensing standards, define eligibility for care, and require service plans to be developed for day care children.

We included the National Association for the Education of Young Children standards in Committee discussions because they are more comprehensive than either licensing or purchase standards and would provide a stimulus for broader thinking.

Advisory Committee "Design"

Our first step was to develop a tentative design for the Advisory Committee, including its structure, functions and available resources. We sought feedback from a variety of sources, including prospective committee members and people we would look to for support later on.

In forming the Advisory Committee, we wanted members who would reflect a balance of perspectives, as well as individuals who could help effect changes.

Without task forces, sub-committees or working groups, most large groups would flounder.

Task forces can research issues, write initial drafts which may be used as jumping-off points for large-group discussion, and write final statements on behalf of the larger group. The Advisory Committee's work was aided considerably by its Quality Criteria Task Force, whose members included a parent, provider, academics, a resource and referral worker, an OFC licensor and a day care policy student. The tasks included:

Levels of Quality of Child Day Care

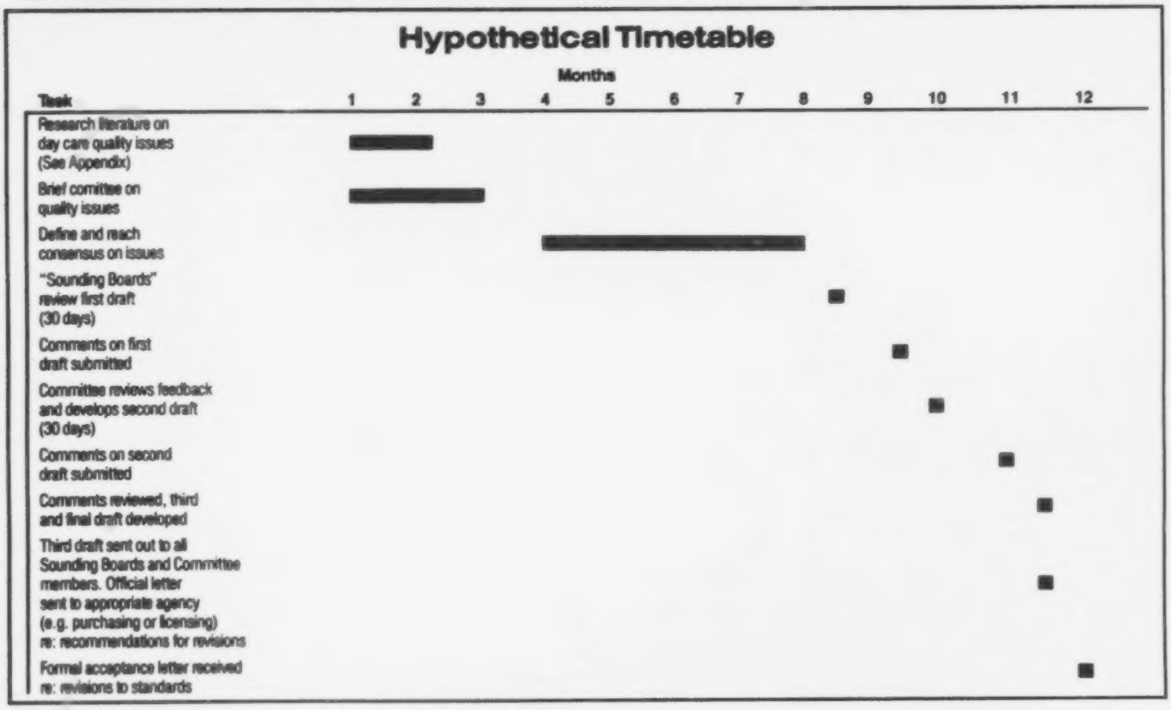
by Gwen Morgan

Type of Standards	To Whom Applied	By Whom Established	Legal Base	Process of Revising
Licensing	All child day care programs	Licensing agency	Delegated authority by the Legislature	All interests represented in a democratic process that includes parents, providers, experts
Purchase Standards	All programs using funds from the government by purchase, contract or voucher	Funding agency	Contract relationship	Agency specifies by internal process; may be affected by negotiation with providers
Accreditation	All who voluntarily seek it	Could be varied; best done by peer group	Voluntary participation	Professional

57

- Identifying the relevant literature on quality day care and standards formulation;
- Preparing a brief summary of each article and book reviewed, as well as a cross-comparison of regulations, purchase standards and NAEYC criteria, which was first discussed within the Task Force and was then presented to the larger Advisory Committee;
- Drafting a set of recommendations for amendment to the state's purchase standards, which was presented to the Advisory Committee for discussion.
- Screening new recommendations from committee members before they were presented to the Advisory Committee in order to organize and frame the discussion; and
- Drafting formal language for the recommendations at each stage of the process.

In addition, there was a Health Care Task Force which included a day care worker and several representatives of the Department of Public Health. It focussed on general health and safety standards, as well as specific changes which were ultimately considered more appropriate to licensing standards.


Hypothetical Timetable

Relationship/Coordination Between Various Members and Organizations

In our committee, we began with a potential conflict between OFC, as the state agency which licenses day care facilities, and DSS, the state agency which purchases day care. So our success partially relied upon coordination and cooperation among OFC and DSS, and the manner in which that relationship was respected and reinforced by the committee as a whole. For example, DSS felt very strongly about the process committee members used to introduce new recommendations for the standards. By accepting their proposal a new level of trust was established between DSS and the committee, and the group process was strengthened. To facilitate coordination and cooperation, we began with these basic principles:

- Both agencies (OFC and DSS) want a system of quality day care in Massachusetts;
- The goal of the activity is in everyone's interest: improving the quality of state-funded day care;
- Two heads are smarter than one; and
- Intelligent and creative people can overcome the territoriality of agency definitions and functions.

TIPS: Forming Committees

- Draw up a list of the kinds of people to be included in the committee.
- Try to maintain a balance of interests: consumers, providers, teachers, community people, citizen groups, state agency representatives, League of Women Voters, Rotary Clubs, unions (including those which organize day care workers), businesses and of course, parents.
- Strive for a balance of people to serve on the committee, e.g., male/female, multicultural and multiracial, urban/rural.
- Choose carefully. A committee is only as creative and productive as its members.
- Broad representation brings a variety of perspectives.
- Consider the size of the committee. The larger it is, the more necessary it will be to work in small sub-committees or task forces.
- Send out formal invitations.
- Go through proper channels where appropriate. If you want a state agency representative or legislative staff person, go straight to the top. Either ask the Commissioner or the legislator to assign an individual of his/her choice, or request that she send a particular individual (whom you name) to be a member of the committee.
- Where appropriate, invite individuals directly rather than going through the employer.

Initial Meetings

First meetings are important because they set the tone and framework for everything that follows. Our initial meetings were designed to:

- Establish an environment or committee "climate" as a neutral ground for open discussion which allows room for disagreement;
- Lay ground rules for a decision-making style;
- Educate committee members and develop common definitions of "quality" day care, licensing, purchase standards and accreditation;
- Establish task forces, which would be the "worker bees" for the committee; and
- Establish frequency of meetings, location and timing.

Establishing an open, neutral and sharing environment can be established in numerous ways:

- Break the group into two's for introductions and then ask each to introduce her partner to the larger group;
- Hang large newspaper print on the wall on which people write their names, agency/organization, and why they are concerned about quality day care;
- Ask participants to jot down categories of child care consumers and why they need care. Then ask them to read their statements to the full group (or everyone can throw statements into a hat and pick someone else's to read);
- Be welcoming and reinforcing—acknowledge the importance of each individual's perspective and emphasize that the group will collectively facilitate a lively and challenging exchange in which everyone will learn; and

TIPS: Conflicts and Competing Interests

When you identify potential conflicts or competing interests:

- It is an important first step when you acknowledge they really exist!
- Enlist anyone who may be part of the potential conflict in the task of resolving it.
- Define your common goals and your points of difference.
- Understand the interests, goals and positions of the "other party," and share your own.
- Listen to each other and acknowledge similarities and areas where each party can teach or help each other.
- Acknowledge your spirit of cooperation to others and seek their support and commitment to obtaining a workable resolution.
- Prepare a formal paper listing the negotiated points of agreement.

- Provide refreshments to set a positive tone.

Our decision-making style was to strive for consensus. If we were unable to achieve consensus, we agreed to have a vote. We chose this method because it fostered discussion and required participants to negotiate and come to an agreed-upon solution. Another method could be voting without pushing for consensus, allowing for pros and cons to be aired.

In educating the committee members about day care quality and regulatory issues in the initial meetings, we held several presentations:

- A panel of experts who spoke about the Office for Children licensing standards, the Department of Social Services Purchase Standards and the NAEYC Criteria for Accreditation of Quality Day Care Programs.
- A panel on issues in quality day care, presented by a teacher, an OFC licensor, a national day care expert, a DSS policymaker, a parent and a Headstart representative.
- A cross-cultural presentation on day care to stimulate thinking about day care, given different economic, political and cultural systems.

Getting Started

Following the committee's initial meetings, designed to educate members about quality day care issues and the various levels of standards, we turned to our task at hand: identifying potential issues for the DSS purchase standards.

Small groups are often more effective than large groups simply because there is more opportunity for exchange. Because our committee was so large, we often broke into smaller groups to facilitate discussion and clarification of individuals' positions on an issue, and then presented a summary to the larger group.

Staying on Course

When confronting the complex task of developing or revising standards of quality it is easy to lose sight of the given parameters. The

TIPS: Initial Meetings

- Lay the ground rules and establish an environment that encourages discussion and analytic thinking.
- Prepare educational material for initial meetings on quality issues in day care and on local and state standards (e.g. licensing, purchase, NAEYC).
- Find the correct balance between educating and working on the task at hand.
- Develop a sub-committee structure so that members are working in areas where they are most knowledgeable.
- Make group decisions as to committee assignments, meeting times and how decisions will be made.
- Respect each person on the committee for her/his unique contribution.
- Try to use committee members as resource people on panels, as speakers, etc.
- Approach the task with the expectation that it will be fun!

fact that our committee's charge was to address changes in the purchase standards, which pertain to only one-third of all licensed centers, was a source of frustration and confusion for those who felt that certain problems should be confronted in the licensing regulations.

For example, the committee thought that many of the proposed health and safety issues should be incorporated into the licensing regulations. But our task was not to change the licensing regulations; there is a separate legally defined process to review and revise them.

After much discussion, the committee found ways to modify its proposed changes to be more relevant to the purchase standards. In addition, we kept separate lists of the issues which were more appropriate for OFC licensing regulations or DSS policy, which we sent to the appropriate departments for their consideration.

The Feedback Process

A through review and critical feedback from the day care community is the key to developing a quality final product that has broad support.

In an effort to reach everyone who we felt should be consulted, we identified all the major day care advocacy groups and constituencies that committee members represented, including OFC's Council for Children network. We sent out hundreds of copies of the recommendations, explaining the process of developing recommendations and soliciting feedback, with ample space to comment.

Two drafts were sent out in this manner, and comments were incorporated into each successive draft.

In order to facilitate discussion within the committee, standards were grouped with related recommendations so we could clearly see the range of responses.

Sample Feedback on Recommendation Standard

Draft:

The center should encourage parents and family members to be involved in the program in various ways. Parents are welcome visitors

TIPS: Process

- A good chairperson or co-chairpersons are essential to facilitate open discussion, clarify issues and summarize discussion. Chairpersons can be rotated.
- Minute-takers are the memory and scribe of the group. Minutes should go out to members following each meeting.
- Create a group (e.g. task force, sub-committee, steering committee) to do research and frame the discussion for the larger group.
- Create other Task Forces as necessary.
- Develop a process for introducing new recommendations which allows for maximum input in an organized fashion.
- Vary the format: small and large group discussion, presentations, etc.
- Define and redefine your task as you progress; it is a rare design which isn't reshaped as the group evolves.
- Keep members informed through written materials, and share any relevant new articles or other literature by mail. Send out articles or editorials that will stimulate thinking.

TIPS:

- Be clear from the start about the scope of your mission and communicate this to the committee.
- Remind the committee as necessary.
- Consider other vehicles to express committee concerns when they are not appropriate for the standards of quality you are addressing.

in the center at all times, for example, to observe, eat lunch with a child, or volunteer to help in the classroom.

Comments:

I support this standard, but a longer list of examples should be included.

I support this standard, but visitors shouldn't interrupt program operations.

It's an excellent standard, since parents are the child's first teacher and should be able to visit any time.

The committee received feedback before each meeting, along with the last meeting's minutes.

Groups were given one month to respond to the draft. The entire process for feedback took roughly three months.

As a result of this process, the committee and the day care community were pleased with the final recommendations. The Department of Social Services incorporated all the recommended revisions into the standards which are currently being used to define the required level of quality in all state-funded day care programs.

Final Recommendations

Our final recommendations included the following standards which state-funded providers must now meet. (The language that represents additions to the previous DSS standards is in italics.)

Affirmative Action—*A demonstrated effort to create* staffing patterns that reflect diverse racial/ethnic and linguistic minority groups they serve.... *Information/material must be available in parent's native language, when needed.*

Parent Involvement With Regard to Multicultural Standard—*Information and materials about the program are given to new and prospective families, including written and oral descriptions of the program's philosophy and operating procedures. Information must be provided in the parent's native language or interpreted, to the extent possible, when needed.*

Parent Involvement—**a)** *A process has been developed for orienting children and parents to the center which includes a parent orientation meeting at a mutually agreed-upon time and, when feasible, pre-enrollment visits as a gradual introduction of children to the center.* **b)** *The center should encourage parents and family members to be involved in the program in various ways. Parents are welcome visitors in the center at all times (for example, to observe, eat lunch with a child, or volunteer to help in the classroom).* **c)** *For infant/toddler programs, a daily written system (e.g., check list, note, home/school log) should be developed to communicate information readily available to parents and staff regarding food intake, amount of sleep, and general developmental information, and time should be alloted to teachers to fulfill this task.* **d)** *Parents are informed about their children and center's program on a regular basis through such vehicles as phone calls, individual conferences, notes, newsletters, bulletin boards, and other similar measures.*

Training—There must be at least 24 hours of staff training per year for each staffperson *in addition to staff meetings which will include areas such as: child growth and development, health and safety, curriculum planning, guidance and discipline techniques, communication and relations with families, child abuse and neglect, sensitivity to multicultural issues, design of a child-safe, child-oriented environment, and nutrition education.*

Training may include attendance at workshops and seminars, visits to children's programs, in-service sessions or enrollment in college level/technical school courses.

There shall be documentation to verify that this practice is carried out in each center.

Day Care agencies shall encourage and enable staff (teaching and administrative) to participate in relevant training.

Day Care agencies shall also enable staff to participate in specifically prescribed training when advised by DSS.

Health and Safety—Optimal health conditions must be maintained for all children and adults in the center. *In addition to compliance with the OFC regulations on health and nutritional services:* **a)** *There shall be written procedures for maintaining clean and sanitary conditions for staff, children and the center environment that shall include, but not be limited to: handwashing, cleaning of bathroom fixtures, removal of trash, washing of equipment and toys and availability of staff trained in CPR and emergency first aid.* **b)** *The center shall have written policies specific to the care and attendance (e.g. sick child room, limitations on attendance) of sick children, the*

prevention of the spread of communicable diseases and the management of outbreaks of communicable diseases. **c)** *Centers shall notify the local board of health in the case of an outbreak of contagious disease (including meningitis, H flu, hepatitis, giardia, salmonella, shigella) and follow their required procedures.* **d)** *In addition to required immunization data, providers shall require lead screening as defined by Childhood Lead Poison Prevention Program, DPH and shall maintain documentation that children have received appropriate lead screening.* **e)** *Centers shall maintain and keep on file logs regarding incidents such as injuries, health concerns and safety issues which occurred/arose with children in the course of the day.*

Logs shall be used by day care staff to inform them of specific daily health and safety issues. Review of this information shall be used by center in planning, and health and safety monitoring.

There was a universal feeling of satisfaction with the recommendations and their incorporation by DSS:

I feel good. I feel pleasantly surprised. It's all going to happen. —Childcare Resource and Referral worker

Once we acknowledged the parameters, we were able to move, and we came up with recommendations people felt comfortable with. —DSS Day Care Administrator

There are lots of positive outcomes that you'll never be able to measure or even know about, things that are addressed outside of your agenda.—Policy analyst, Children's Bureau, U.S. Health and Human Services, Administration for Children, Youth and Families (Regional Office)

Controversial Issues

During the course of the committee's work, a number of controversial issues emerged. Should the state purchasing agency require its contracted programs to pay day care workers a decent wage? Tighten its staff/child ratio? Require smaller group sizes? Are the purchase standards the appropriate vehicle to address these and other issues, or do they need to be handled through such means as the state budget process, filing of legislation, or changing the overall statewide licensing regulations?

Furthermore, there was a concern that if the standards are "too high," programs may not be able to afford to contract with the state, or may be forced to pass on the cost of higher quality care to parents, who in turn, may find themselves priced out of the market.

These dilemmas are illustrated by the most controversial issue to come before the Advisory Committee: day care workers' wages.

There is a crisis in day care right now. Day care quality has been adversly effected because qualified people are leaving the field due to low workers' wages.—Day Care Organizer, UAW, District 65

I saw the Advisory Committee as one arena in which the wage issue is being advanced on. It was clear that this was not the decisive place where the wage issue would be won. I did see the meetings as a positive platform for bringing out the issues. Not just DSS heard about it, but people from other state agencies heard how quality is tied up with adequate reimbursement. My hope is that the process (of discussion on wages) made DSS staff aware of the enormous problem providers face because we are unable to pay our employees living wages.—Day Care Provider and Council for Children Member of Advisory Committee

Day Care workers are underpaid. This has to do with the historical attitude society has taken toward the work of women, in general, and child care, in particular. To look exclusively to the state for a solution to the wage problem is a mistake. The problem is much larger and more complex than that.

The Department should, as a major institutional purchaser of Day Care services, be a full partner in developing and supporting a solution. Day Care workers are entitled to a living wage and the Department's rates should reflect this. Analyzing the Department's purchasing policy is an integral and necessary step, but one that should be done with consideration for the rest of the market place. —DSS Director of Purchased Services

Day care workers' wages are one of the key determinants of quality care. Because of low wages, qualified day care professionals are unable to stay in the field, and in fact, the 30% turnover rate in day care is higher than in any other human service profession (Source: Child Care Employee Project, Berkeley, California).

Quality care for young children depends upon the continuity of the relationships developed between teachers and children. When staff are forced to leave, due to a very low wage structure and little promise of upward mobility, the quality of that care suffers.

The wage issue was identified from the committee's inception as a key quality issue we would address. Whether or not the purchase standards were the forum for trying to affect the issue was still unclear. What was clear was that the committee was angry about low wages and felt it was absolutely crucial to discuss the issue.

Initially, two committee members, a citizen volunteer and a representative of the main day care union in Massachusetts, UAW District 65, presented a memo to the committee identifying particular language in the DSS purchase guidelines which they believed could be used to favor low wages in DSS/provider contract negotiations. The guidelines stated that "salary levels will be competitively reviewed and analyzed. A cost-of-living increase of up to 7% above last year's level will be considered."

The committee members felt that this language could be used to decrease rather than increase salaries. Their memo offered specific language which would encourage increasing, rather than decreasing, wages in state-contracted day care. When the memo was distributed the room immediately filled with tension. The discussion began with an angry exchange between DSS and a provider. This interchange reflected a number of underlying issues:

- The anger of committee members that worker wages are so low, and the deeply felt understanding of the impact this has on the quality of care;
- The feeling of frustration of many committee members because of their lack of power to create changes;
- The historical experience of distrust betwen DSS and the day care community;
- The feeling of frustration among DSS representatives who expressed that they do care about day care worker wages and are unable to effect change due to fiscal constraints, the competing priorities for social services, and their lack of power to create changes.

The discussion was full of sparks, jabs and counterpoints. DSS defended the intent of the purchase guideline language to encourage increases in worker wages. Other members took issue with this, basing their comments on experience, as providers, with DSS area staff during contract negotiations. Many seemed to believe that policies made at the central level of DSS were reinterpreted by the time they reached the area level for implementation.

But was this the appropriate arena to solve the problem of low wages? The committee decided that we needed a forum to discuss the wage issue where we would hear a range of perspectives. Then we could decide whether we would address the wage question in DSS purchase standards.

The forum began with a panel presentation which included the Director of Purchase Services for DSS, a day care union organizer from UAW, District 65, and a popular legislator who had sponsored a successful piece of legislation on comparable worth.

Following the panel presentation, a full two hours was spent debating the wage question.

A second memo by the original authors was presented at the forum which clearly outlined the proposed language to be included in the purchase standards:

1. The levels of wages to be paid to day care workers under contract with the Department of Social Services shall be at least equal to the

TIPS:

- Getting to this point required allowing everyone—DSS consumers, providers—to speak their minds. Anger and frustration needed a forum for ventilation, and then creative thinking could proceed.
- The key players had to be a part of this discussion, including DSS and the union, as well as consumers, providers, agency representatives and citizens.
- The committee needed time to think. Tabling the discussion allowed that time.

wages paid to State employees performing comparable work. As a condition of contracting with the Department, centers will be required to provide documentation that the wages paid to employees comply with this minimum.

2. Benefits

a. The Department of Social Services recognizes that stress, physical exertion and exposure to illness are inherent in day care work. Therefore, the Department will support provider-paid comprehensive health insurance for employees.

b. Costs for employee pensions will be considered acceptable by the Department.

c. The Department recognizes that work in day care is stressful and that leave time policies should reflect this fact. Four weeks paid vacation per year and five weeks paid vacation after five years will be supported by the Department.

Articles were disseminated about the value of day care work as well as its occupational hazards: *Child Care Work Can Be Dangerous to Your Health*, Childcare Employee Project; "The Nanny Trap: Child Care Work Today," by Lana Hostetler (testimony reprinted in *Young Children*, January 1984).

Finally, the discussion focussed on whether the purchase standards were the appropriate mechanism to address the problem of day care workers' low wages. The resolution at that meeting was to table the discussion for one month, during which time the committee would consult with UAW, District 65. Because their opinion was so highly valued, it proved to be the determinant of the final decision not to incorporate the wage issue into the purchase standards. The union believed that DSS could not, in isolation, require all contracted providers to increase wages. Furthermore, they saw the issue as primarily a money issue, requiring other strategies such as the budget process to affect change. The committee decided, instead, to write a strong policy statement to DSS regarding the wage issue:

The Advisory Committee recommends that strong support be given to the recommendations of the Governor's Day Care Partnership Project (see Chapter 8) regarding the increase of day care worker wages. All the other recommendations made by our committee on improving the quality of center-based day care hinge on this commitment to improved wages. We suggest that the standard which currently reads: "Salary levels will be competitively reviewed and analyzed" be reworded to communicate raising rather than capping of salaries.

The committee also recommends support of the Governor's Day Care Partnership Project regarding the issue of increasing the *socio-economic mix of children receiving state subsidies by raising the eligibility limit to 115% of median income. We consider these two issues to be compatible and of equal importance.*

Beyond the Citizen Involvement Project:

Lobbying and Policymaking on the State Level

Chapter 8

The process of creating change in the day care delivery system can occur on many levels, including local, state and federal. Problems with accessibility, affordability and quality of services cannot be adequately addressed on any one of those levels alone. While the Citizen Involvement Project began with a limited focus,participants began to move beyond Project activities to explore other avenues for change.

On the Local Level

In the process of reviewing day care proposals, the committees learned about the contracted day care system. They developed an understanding of the flaws in that system as well as the strengths. When making recommendations to the purchasing agency about funding, they were often able to influence the quality of state-funded day care.

Likewise, the committees played a major role by reviewing the quality of state-funded programs through site visits, observation of classrooms and interviewing of staff.

Working to encourage employer support for day care, they were addressing both the need for diversified funding of day care and the growing need to sensitize the workplace to family issues and concerns.

All these activities collectively contribute to an accountable day care system which can more fully meet the growing need for services.

Nonetheless, these activities do not cover all the bases. As participants in the Project learned more about the day care system, they were also confronted with:

- Lack of sufficient funds to maintain quality programs;
- Inadequate training funds for day care staff;
- Too few subsidized slots for low-income consumers;
- Standards that are not uniformly enforced;
- Inadequate rates of reimbursement for abused and/or neglected children in day care;
- Administrative problems within the purchasing agency;
- Issues that arise due to insufficient licensing resources;
- Lack of coordination among day care providers;
- Dilemmas faced by providers who want to increase day care worker wages, as well as keep parent fees at a reasonable cost; and
- The problems parents face in finding quality day care.

Some of these issues can be dealt with through discussion or negotiations with the purchasing agency. Perhaps a shift in agency priorities can free up some dollars for more slots or training. Perhaps the purchasing agency can be convinced to address administrative problems or standards which are not being enforced.

But the bottom line is that any agency or institution is captive to the parameters of its funding. Day care is primarily funded through the federal Social Service Block Grant. Each state determines how it will prioritize the allocation of these funds among the range of social services offered. This is a process which unfurls through the budget cycle, involving both the legislative and executive branches of the state government.

The amount of money an agency has available to spend on delivering services is a major determinant of policy. When there is not enough money to go around, an agency must often make difficult decisions about who is eligible to receive services, how much the service will cost if there is a fee, whether basic social services will include such support costs as transportation or professional consultation, and so on.

It is no surprise that as participants in the Citizen Involvement Project began to experience the limitations of the day care delivery system, they began to increase their activity on legislative, budget and policy issues, including the following initiatives:

- Sponsorship of forums for providers on child sexual abuse;
- Initiation and encouragement of day care provider networking and support groups;
- Review of day care policy issues and participation in public forums on day care;
- Budget advocacy for expansion in licensing resources and subsidized day care slots, development of child care resource and referral services, rate increases for providers, and new services;
- Work with local providers and town officials to resolve zoning problems, particularly for family day care;
- Legislative advocacy, including meetings with legislators and submission of testimony on bills;
- Program development (e.g. infant/toddler program);
- Increased media exposure on day care issues; and
- Public speaking on quality day care issues.

On the Statewide Level

In addition to stimulating local advocacy activities, the Project played a major role in a number of day care policy arenas, including the Governor's Day Care Partnership Project.

The Partnership Project was a six-month comprehensive study of the day care delivery system, created in 1984 by Massachusetts Governor Dukakis as a result of ardent lobbying by day care advocates. Its mission was to examine the roles of the state, private sector, universities and local communities in relation to day care policy. Included in its scope was an examination of the state as a model employer. Participants included representatives from state agencies, business, labor, consumers, providers, and legislators. Citizen Involvement Project staff participated in this study, taking leadership roles in several of the sub-committees.

Over 600 people participated in public forums and hearings held to elicit a response to draft recommendations. These were sponsored by the Partnership Project and coordinated through the Council for Children network.

The final recommendations of the Governor's Day Care Partnership Project included a strong role for the Office for Children, calling for increased funding for licensing and the funding of a statewide network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, to be administered by the Office for Children.

Improving the Quality of Day Care:

What Citizens Can Do Locally

Appendix A

TIPS:

- Identify and clarify your goal, such as improving the quality of day care or increasing funding levels in your state or local area.
- Network with other day care advocacy groups in your local area or region or state to coordinate your activities and develop a unified direction.
- Identify your resources for information, such as legislators and their aides, state agency staff, other advocacy groups.
- Contact your resources and collect information about supply and demand for day care, state and federal funding levels and current employer involvement.
- List possible options for action to reach your goal such as conferences and training to prepare advocates for lobbying, budget and legislative lobbying, public forums for legislators, media campaigns and consumer education.
- Identify your allies and potential allies in addition to day care advocates, such as friendly legislators, community organizations, women's groups, welfare rights groups, business and labor.
- Acknowledge your resources as well as your limitations.
- Develop a workable structure.
- Identify your target audience.
- Document your case, using fact sheets and written material when necessary.
- Be patient. Change takes time!

The Citizen Involvement Project staff were increasingly invited to join various state agency and outside policy committees, as well as to respond to media requests to discuss quality day care issues. The increased awareness and reporting of sexual abuse in day care centers also led many people to the Project's materials on quality day care issues.

Finally, because the Project was connected to a "field" network through the Councils for Children, there was a steady flow of information back and forth which aided local committees in making informed decisions about their day care advocacy activity.

In summary, the Project:

- Provided linkages between the Council for Children network and policy makers;
- Increased the level of citizen action;
- Brought more visibility to the Office for Children for its expertise in day care policy; and
- Led to increased funding for day care licensors and to responsibility for administering a Child Care Resource and Referral network.

73

Computerizing Day Care

Chapter 9

The final component of the Citizen Involvement Project involved the computerization of day care information within the Office for Children.

Some people believe that computers are a brilliant tool to manipulate data in creative ways to solve complex problems efficiently. Others fear that computers can also distort reality by being too quantitative or that computers can invade an individual's privacy.

Perhaps there is a bit of truth in both perspectives since computers reflect the human characters, values and ideologies of the people who work with them. Information can be invasive and computers—because of their ability to sort and categorize information quickly—can simply be invasive faster.

On the other hand, as with any system, if we are aware of the pitfalls possible with computers they can be avoided. One must approach computerization with a strong ethical foundation as one determines who controls and has access to information.

Why Computerize Information?

As the agency which licenses and monitors all day care facilities throughout Massachusetts, the Office for Children is responsible for maintaining the health and safety of children in those facilities. Each facility must comply with state regulations that define such areas as staff/child ratio and staff qualifications, the size and nature of indoor and outdoor space, options for parent involvement, and health and safety. Licensors visit each program to initially license the facility, and they periodically monitor for compliance to standards.

The process of computerizing day care information is currently underway. Until it is completed, licensors collect and store all licensing information about their day care facilities manually. Monthly reports are developed manually. Quarterly and annual reports are developed manually.

Over the years many licensors have developed their own elaborate systems for keeping up-to-date on which licenses are about to expire, which programs require a monitoring visit and so on. Large maps of Massachusetts, color-coded with flags, colored thumbtacks, stars and the like tell the licensor the status of each center... a 3-D technicolor creation that no computer could quite equal!

Nonetheless, this takes time perhaps better spent providing technical assistance to a day care center that is in violation of a licensing regulation or time better spent receiving in-service training on how to handle particular kinds of problems that arise.

OFC also operates a statewide network of area offices which individuals can contact for information, referral and advocacy services. In 1984, over 34 percent of informational calls at area offices were for day care services. Some of these calls required follow-up services.

Each area office uses OFC lists of licensed day care facilities updated by the Licensing Unit in order to perform day care information and referral services.Because of the manual process for updating information, the lists are bound to reflect outdated information.

Licensors need computerized information to make their work more efficient. OFC advocates who provide information and referral services need computerization to give parents more accurate and useful information. And yet the process of implementing computerization has been slow, due to resistance from the Legislative budget committees which must approve state agency computerization plans. The OFC now has two microcomputers in its central office, and over a one-to two-year period computerization is projected to spread to a regional and an area level. At the end, each OFC area office would have a microcomputer.

The major areas of focus are:

- Consumer Information—Information "profiles" about all child care facilities will be made available to consumers. These can be obtained by "asking" the computer for lists of day care facilities according to age of child, location, public subsidies available, or a combination of such factors. This will save consumers time and effort by providing information only on facilities which meet their criteria.
- Management of Licensing Information—Licensors will receive up-to-date reports on all facilities they license and monitor, including when licenses are up for renewal, any legal action against a facility, and date of visits with non-compliances cited.
- Analysis—By combining specific data about each facility and general information regarding supply (e.g. how many programs of a certain type, in a certain location) with data regarding demand for services, more elaborate analysis can take place, resulting in further projections of need.

Other things which the computer can do:

- Word processing;
- Electronic mail between all offices;
- Budget development;
- Licensor scheduling; and
- Enhanced policy development.

The System can be used by others within Massachusetts as it is designed. In other states, the software may be used but the system must be adapted to meet the particular uses and needs of that state or entity.

In order to better obtain needed consumer information, we worked with a committee of licensors to revise their licensing forms. The committee carefully considered the kinds of information parents need in order to select quality day care programs. This information was fed back to the computer experts in the agency who then developed a format for "consumer searches."

When you are designing a system that will be computerized, the process unfolds in three stages:

- Figure out what questions you need answered. For example, START FROM YOUR END POINT. What do you want to know about each day care program? How would you like this information organized as it comes out of the computer? Do you want it organized by geographical location? By age grouping, or vacancy rate, or availability of vegetarian meals?
- Once you know what you need, you can design how the information will be collected.
- Once you know how the information will be collected, you can design how a computer can do what you need it to do to reach your end point. No software or hardware should be selected or procured until this stage is well on its way. This will allow you to make choices based on a clearer picture of your needs.

TIPS: Choosing Equipment

- Software selection is key. The equipment, or hardware, you select is based on the software you select.
- Look for equipment which is compatible with major brands of hardware and software (e.g. IBM).
- For most uses, commercial software is best, as opposed to custom-designed software. It can usually do what is needed or it can be modified if necessary. With commercial software, purchased off the shelf, you can easily receive information about its use and capabilities.
- Compare costs.
- Consider preformance, reliability, capacity, and price.
- Consider the extent of your needs and select hardware and software accordingly.
- Consider ease of use and modification of software (ability to change a program to better suit your needs, as they change).
- Find out if training is provided in use of equipment, and the quality of the training.
- Find out the terms for maintenance.
- Investigate the reliability of the manufacturer.
- If you are a public agency, find out if there is equipment on contract which may be cheaper, and compare costs and quality with non-contracted equipment.

Finally, shop around and consult experts, as necessary. Experts are not sales people with a vested interest in their product. Try to find more than one knowledgeable person who understands your needs and has no vested interest in selling you a system.

76

Selecting Software and Hardware

Hardware, often called equipment, is to software like a car is to fuel. You can plug in a computer and it will warm up, but without the software it is useless to you. Software is a set of instructions that tell a computer what to do. It is what you need to make the computer run and do useful work.

Procuring Equipment and Software in a State Bureaucracy

In order to receive funds for computerization, OFC was first required to get approval on its proposed plans from the state Executive Office of Human Services (OFC's overseeing agency), the legislative budget committees, the Governor's budget committee, and the state Bureau of Systems Policy and Planning, which deals with computerization of state agencies. Once these plans were approved, OFC was required to request approval on spending the funds.

The state of Massachusetts also requires that a statewide planning committee be formed to represent all interests which will benefit from computerization. This actually has been a positive requirement, as it has encouraged broader input in the development of the system and has facilitated a back-and-forth flow of information throughout the OFC statewide network regarding computerization plans.

TIPS: Computerization

- Planning is crucial. Spend adequate time thinking about and designing what you need to know.
- Develop short-and long-term goals.
- Seek out advice where necessary.
- Include the people who will be affected in the planning process.
- Discuss the ethical questions raised by computerization.
- Purchase equipment which is compatible with equipment used by other projects, and agencies, as appropriate.
- Protect information which should be confidential.

Confidentiality

Some information simply should not be accessible. It is important to define, as you would in developing any manual system, what information should and should not be available, and to whom. Information collected about people's past welfare records, criminal records, unsubstantiated complaints of abuse or neglect, etc. can be used against them. Computers must be used wisely. There are some fairly simple methods to protect information in a computerized system:

- Information can simply be kept on a floppy disk—like a record which stores information—and easily be stored away in a locked file; or
- Information can be protected by using special passwords or "commands" for access.

Once you know what information should be kept confidential, a method can be designed to protect that confidentiality.

Evaluation:

The Why's and How's

Chapter 10

We live in a fast-paced, hectic world where more emphasis is often placed on "doing" than on reflecting about what has been done. Some fear that reflecting means "not doing"; but growth, new ideas and change can all come from reflection.

A formal or informal evaluation of your activities is one vehicle for reflection, leading to growth, new ideas and change.

The Citizen Involvement Project hired a formal evaluator to help us reflect on our activities.

By looking at such factors as volunteer motivation for involvement, the effectiveness of our training and our written materials and the overall impact of the Project's activities for day care, our evaluation—mid-way and final—gave us tremendous insight.

There are two formal approaches to evaluation: formative and summative. In a formative evaluation the evaluator acts as a consultant throughout the course of the project, offering advice and feedback which help to shape the activity. The focus of evaluation can be on process and/or content, using the goals and objectives of the activity as a guide for measurement. As the activity changes based on the evaluator's input, the evaluation may also change, thus creating an interactive process.

In a summative evaluation, the evaluator enters the scene at the end of the activity, focussing on the process and/or content, with an eye for measurement of the established goals and objectives. A summative evaluation does not allow for much interaction with the program and one of its major uses may be to seek refunding.

For either of these approaches, an evaluator may choose to do qualitative and/or quantitative analysis.

Qualitative analysis involves looking at the context of what is being analyzed and capturing the subjective experiences and perspectives of participants in a given activity being studied. It is often used for sociological or anthropological studies where the voices of those being studied as well as the description of their neighborhoods or cultural backgrounds give valuable insight. The data which are generated in a qualitative analysis, based on interviews and observations, is reported in a descriptive manner, and often includes quotations of participants to further clarify or elucidate a point.

For example, if an evaluator is assessing the success of a social service program in serving its target population, he may first assess the nature of the program and its various components and perhaps the neighborhood where it is located. He may then look at the client's reaction to the program and to the neighborhood where it is located, whether the client is receiving good services and why, and what impact the program may have on the client's life.

Quantitative analysis involves numerical measurement and seeks to avoid subjective interpretations. Data can be collected directly through questionnaires to participants in an activity or program under study, or researchers can utilize narrative statements from participants, extracting data which are tallied in a numerical fashion.

For example, if an evaluator is assessing the same social service program mentioned above, she may make an assessment based on numbers of clients served in the program, number of interactions between clients and service providers, and dollars spent on the program. Quantitative reports tend to be filled with numbers, charts and graphs.

These two approaches—qualitative and quantitative analysis—are not mutually-exclusive and many evaluators may choose to use them in combination.

Selecting an Evaluator

In selecting one evaluator, we had the following considerations:

- Evaluator's area of expertise;
- Budget;
- Expectations and needs of the funding source regarding evaluation;
- Project needs; and
- Rapport with evaluator.

We selected our evaluator because of his expertise in the area of citizen involvement, as well as his proposed comprehensive design for evaluating the Project. Because our budget for evaluation was relatively small ($8,000 for two years), we chose a limited summative evaluation to document our activities and analyze the Project's processes and content.

Methodology

There were three components to the evaluation:

- Content Analysis—The evaluator read all major written material from the Project, including the project proposal, quarterly reports, training material, fact sheets on the project, articles written by the Project staff, working papers concerning recommendations about quality standards and employer-sponsored day care, summaries of proposal reviews conducted by citizen teams, descriptions of training events, summaries of questionnaires used by staff at training events and statistical and descriptive summaries prepared by staff.
- Observation—Evaluator attended a sample of training sessions and meetings of the Advisory Committee on Purchase of Service Standards to assess numbers and types of participants, their level of involvement and the ability of Project staff to communicate effectively as trainers or staff to a committee. The evaluator also met with Project staff monthly.
- Interviews—The evaluator interviewed Project staff, as well as a representative sample (25%) of citizens who participated in the Project (the latter by phone). The evaluator sought information on participants' motivation for involvement in the Project, activities which occurred as a result of training, impact of those activities, and effectiveness of follow-up technical assistance from Project staff.

In staff interviews the evaluator offered a neutral perspective. He reinforced our insights into state government and shared his own. And he brought to us his experiences from other organizations which helped us to maintain a balance of understanding in our own. The evaluator also assessed the relationship of the Project to the overall Office for Children structure.

Documentation

The evaluator of the Project submitted two reports: an interim report and a final report. The interim report offered us valuable insight about citizen motivation for participation as well as positive reinforcement for Project activities. The final evaluation report summarized findings regarding Project activities, and focussed on the impact of the Project at the local and state level and within OFC.

The final report is very important in the life of any Project. The interim and final evaluation report were shared with OFC staff, including those who participated in the training, and with senior level staff who participated only in very indirect ways. It provided an understanding of the Project from an outside expert's perspective, which can help to offset biases and bring credibility to the results. The evaluation report should:

- Document your activities clearly in one report;
- Frame your activities in measurable terms;
- Document successes and problems;
- Support your activities, which may be useful for future funding or acknowledgement; and
- Teach you something new.

Fees

Standard fees for a consultant may range from $100 to $200/day. For our Project, this translated into 40 days (20 per year). We negotiated with the evaluator how his time would be divided among the various activities.

What If There's No Budget?

Regardless of your budget for evaluation, there are ways in which you can evaluate your activities:

- Take some time to reflect on your activities;
- Consider your goals and objectives and how you will measure them;
- Ask friends, experts, outside individuals or an advisory committee for feedback on your plans and activities as they develop;
- Use written evaluation forms after each major activity to assess the effectiveness of your event;
- Try to step outside day-to-day activities by holding staff meetings out of the office at times, scheduling planning or evaluation retreats to gain perspective on what you are doing;
- Ask your colleagues for feedback on work you are doing, and offer the same in return; and
- Highlight things that go well along with problems to be solved.

Conclusion

Chapter 11

Who decides which day care programs receive public funding in your community? Do you think that those programs reflect quality care? Is there "enough" subsidized day care to meet the current needs of working low-income families, abused and/or neglected children, or welfare recipients who need day care in order to work? How can you make an impact on your day care delivery system?

These are questions we initially posed to ourselves, and now we are asking them of you! We began with some basic notions:

- Parent have a right to quality day care;
- Citizens have a major role to play in evaluating and monitoring the quality of day care in their communities; and
- Employers have a role and responsibility to respond to the child care needs of their employees and communities.

We learned through our experiences that:

- Having knowledge and understanding of the day care system is empowering.
- There is strength in numbers. Working in coalition rather than separately, citizens can have a greater influence on the day care delivery system.
- We need a unified vision. To get to there from here, we must be able to envision what a quality day care system looks like.

The Citizen Involvement Project had a greater impact than we had ever expected, providing a spark which became a flame of dedication and commitment to quality day care in many Massachusetts communities.

At the end of its two-year demonstration, the Project leaves behind an energetic and capable citizen network for quality day care:

- Over 150 trained volunteers, including those who have been trained to be trainers, who continue to review and assess quality in day care facilities.
- 17 active committees which continue to carry on day care proposal review and monitoring.
- Four active committees which continue to work with business, labor, women's organizations and other community groups to develop employer involvement in child care.
- New standards for purchase of day care services which are being used by the Department of Social Services for its contracted day care programs.
- A newly developed Child Care Resource and Referral Network administered by the Office for Children.
- A greater visibility for the Office for Children for its expertise in day care policy. Consequently, OFC staff have been included on day care policy committees, both in government and in advocacy organizations.
- A network of energized and knowledgeable citizens to carry on day care advocacy.

We encourage you to use this manual as a guide to develop your own citizen network to address the need for more quality day care.

We recognize that your particular organizational structure, the political context in which you operate, and the types of economic and social pressures experienced by your community are unique to you and your situation. But we hope that, by using the "tips" that arise from the experience of the Citizen Involvement Project, you will be able to act on the day care needs of your own state or community.

The unifying reason for all our work lies in the children and their families who benefit from quality day care services. Whether we are analyzing a day care budget, or recommending the funding of a particular program, or explaining to a legislator why day care constitutes a crucial support to working families, it is the children and their families who are the winners or losers.

Indicators of Quality—Resource Bibliography

National Association for the Education of Young Children, "Draft Criteria for High Quality Early Childhood Programs." *Young Children*, Nov., 1983.

Buedcone, C. and Schweinhart, L. J., "Cost Effectiveness of High Quality Early Childhood Programs," 1982. High Scope Educational Research Foundation. 600 North River Street, Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197.

US Department of Health and Human Services, *A Parent's Guide to Day Care*, 1980. Publication No. (OHDC) 80-30270. Washington, DC 20201.

Morgan, Gwen, *Summary of Research Findings*, 1984. Wheelock College, 100 Riverway, Boston, MA 02215.

Office for Children, *Standards for Licensure of Group Day Care Centers*, 1978. Regulation Number 102 CMR 7.00. Office of the Secretary of State, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Boston, MA 02215.

Department of Social Services, *Standards for the Provision of Day Care Services*, 1984. Department of Social Services, Boston, MA 02114.

Johnson, L., & Associates, Inc., *Comparative Licensing Study: Profiles of State Day Care Licensing Requirements*, Day Care Division, Administration for Children, Youth and Families, Office of Human Development Services, U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1982. Washington, D.C.

Nelson, J. R., Jr., "The Politics of Federal Day Care Regulation," *Day Care: Scientific and Social Policy Issues*, ed. E. F. Zigler and E. W. Gordon. Boston: Auburn House, 1982.

Ruopp, R., Travers, J. Glantz, F., and Coelen, C. "Children at the Center: Day Care Study." Cambridge, Massachusetts: Abt Associates, 1979.

Ruopp, R., and Travers, J. "Janus Faces Day Care: Perspectives on Quality and Cost," *Day Care: Scientific and Social Policy Issues*, ed. E. F. Zigler and E. W. Gordon, Boston, Auburn House, 1982.

Site Visit Checklist

The purpose of the site visit is to get a sense for the program in operation. This site visit will allow you to see the facility, meet with the director, observe a classroom and, if possible, speak with the head teacher or other staff. Spending one hour observing in a classroom will give you a general sense of the daily activities and curriculum, interaction among the children, staff relationships with the children and with each other and the physical environment of the classroom.

The site visit should take approximately two hours. You should not expect to become an expert on the entire operations of the agency or center. A more comprehensive program review of these same four centers will be undertaken during the fall of 1984.

The intention of this checklist is to offer assistance as you make the site visits to the four centers, as part of your proposal review activities. It is brief and designed to raise specific questions. We encourage you to write down notes and comments throughout the site visit and the check list should be modified as necessary. It is not all inclusive, but a guide to use in your efforts.

Remember, be confident, ask questions and get clarifications on anything that is unclear. Speak with the director and the head teacher (if possible), before leaving. This provides an opportunity to ask any questions as well as thank the staff for their assistance.

Each team member should use a checklist. Once your visit is completed and you have left the center, your team should meet briefly to share overall observations and comments. A more extensive discussion can occur during your proposal review committee meeting.

Information from the site visit is reviewed along with the proposal, last year's recommendations and proposal, council reports, Help for Children data and information and any other available documents.

- Date of Visit
- Hours of Visit
- Team Member
- Other Team Members
- Name of Agency/Program
- Address

I. General Information

a. What population is served? (infant/toddler, preschool, protective or special needs children, racial/ethnic groups, income levels, communities)

b. What type of agency is this? (single purpose, comprehensive child development, multiservice, non-profit, profit, church sponsored...)

c. How is the organization structured...is there a board of directors....are parents involved...community people included?

d. What is the philosophy of the program?

e. What is the intake procedure, hours of operation, fee schedule?

f. What relationships does the agency have with other centers, agencies and organizations in the community?

g. What is the staffing level...orientation...training...salary scale and benefits?

h. Do the staff reflect the racial/ethnic population served...do staff have special skills/talents (multilingual, special needs training, artist...) ...are various age ranges and sexes represented?

i. In what specific ways are parents involved (advisory or board of directors, policy making, in classroom, operation of center)?

II. Facility

a. Where is the center located...what type of building...is it accessible to those who use it?

b. How many classrooms...where are they located?

c. What are the accommodations for indoor and outdoor play?

d. Is there office space...private space for parents and staff to hold conferences...for staff to meet and take breaks?

e. Are there kitchen facilities? If so, what types of meals and snacks are provided?

f. Are the toilet facilities easily accessible?

g. Is the center's space used by other groups on a regular basis (Sunday school, evening meetings, etc.)? If so, how does this affect the center?

III. Observing the Classroom

Physical Environment

a. Is the space arranged so that children can work individually, in small groups and in a large group?

b. Are activity areas (ie. sand/water play, block building, quiet/reading, dramatic play, science/art/music, manipulatives, dress-up) clearly defined...which areas does this classroom have...can children move easily from one to the other...do children know where to use the materials?

c. Are private areas available?

d. Can various activities occur at the same time...quiet and noisy, small group and individual, art and reading?

e. Are the appropriate materials and equipment available...accessible to children...arranged on low, open shelves...in good condition...in sufficient quantity?

f. Are soft items and sound absorbing materials used...rugs, cushions, mats, stuffed pillows, rocking chairs, etc.?

g. What is the outdoor play area like...what equipment is available...what activities can occur?

h. Are there individual storage spaces that are also easily accessible?

i. Are children involved in set-up and clean-up of activities, appropriate to their age level?

j. Is the children's art work and other projects displayed throughout the center...at the children's eye level?

Activities/Schedule

a. What activities have you observed?

b. Has there been a smooth transition?

c. How are children involved in chosing activities...selecting, initiating, deciding?

d. Are there opportunities for various activities to occur at the same time (dress-up, quiet reading, blocks)?

e. Do the activities and materials reflect the racial/ethnic backgrounds of the children (ie. books, posters, art, language, dolls, equipment, story telling)?

f. Does the schedule meet the needs of individual children...is it flexible yet structured...challenging for the children?

g. Describe the ways in which staff are involved in these activities...assisting, participating, initiating, directing, facilitating, etc.

Interactions

a. Do the children seem comfortable...respect one another and the staff?

b. Do the staff seem comfortable with the children...with each other?

c. Do the staff interact frequently with the children...touching, eye contact, holding...assisting, encouraging, explaining, helping, supporting...ask open-ended questions...speak individually to children?

d. Do staff explain rules clearly and consistently?

e. How do staff encourage the development of individual children...foster independence...offer guidance...assist with problem solving?

f. Do staff...converse in a positive way and friendly manner...encourage children to share with each other...solve problems together?

g. If you have observed arrivals or departures, describe the staff/parent interaction.

h. Do the teachers work as a team?

i. How are roles and responsibilities delineated?

j. How do teachers communicate with one another in the classroom?

k. Are volunteers present in the classroom...what are their roles...how do they interact with children...with other staff?

l. How do non-teaching staff (cook, administrator, director, other agency staff) interact and relate to the children?

IV. Other

a. If you have observed lunch or snack being provided, how was it served...how are the children involved...what was served...was it nutritious?

b. Are there any special characteristics/services that this center offers ...schedule of field trips, staff performer/artist, use of community resources, parent groups/classes?

c. Are community people involved in the center...in what ways?

d. Is transportation provided...for whom...how?

e. How has the curriculum been developed...lesson plans devised?

f. If you have any other questions about any aspect of your visit...ask them now, before you leave the center.

Program Review of a Day Care Center: Director's Interview

- Name of director
- Length of time in position
- Agency/center
- Date and location of interview
- Names of committee members conducting interview

Introduce yourselves, take the time to relax and make the director comfortable. Setting the tone for the interview is as vital as the questions to be addressed. Identify the lead interviewer. Other team member(s) should take notes and feel free to ask follow-up questions.

I. Organizational/Administrative

1. What is the center's philosophy? How is this philosophy conveyed to staff? To parents? What characteristics are important to you in a running a center?

2. Does the center have a board of directors? What is the role of the board?

3. How many staff are employed? How are they hired? What characteristics are important for teachers and head teachers to have? What kind of staff turnover do you have—how many staff have left in the last two years? What are the salary ranges for the various positions within the center, including the director's position?

4. How are staff supervised?

5. Do you provide training or in-service opportunities for staff? If so, please describe.

6. Are staff involved in establishing policy or programmatic directions? If so, how does this occur?

7. What process does a parent go through if they want to place their child in the center? Which staff person is responsible for this intake? Are children ever refused? If so, based on what criteria?

8. Are parents involved in establishing center policy...in programmatic decisions? In activities at the center?

9. What records are kept on each child? How do you ensure confidentiality on information?

II. Programmatic

10. Would you describe a typical day in your center?

11. What are the goals of the program? How are goals set for individual children?

12. How do you know if you are achieving your goals?

13. Do you have any specialized services within your program, (ie, supportive services, therapeutic services, family advocates)? If so, please describe them.

14. How do you ensure the safety of each child in your center?

III. Procedural

15. How are center procedures established? What areas are covered in center procedures/policies (ie, emergency, discipline)?

16. What is your procedure if you or a staff person thinks a child may be at risk to abuse or neglect? How is this working?

17. How do you deal with conflicts that arise between center philosophy and a parent's philosophy about child rearing?

18. If a parent has a concern about the program, what do they do?

19. How are procedures changed? Have any been changed in the past year?

IV. Family/community

20. What is the center's role in assisting a family in crisis?

21. Does the center utilize any community resources?

22. How are services coordinated with other agencies in the community?

23. How would you describe the role of your center regarding community issues or local day care issues?

V. Concluding

24. Do you see the need for any services that your center cannot currently provide?

25. Have any changes been made in the program in the last year?

26. What do you think are the major strengths and weaknesses in your program?

27. Are there any plans underway for changes or improvements in the program?

28. Before I end, I'd like to check to see if you have any questions for us?

Resource Bibliography for Trainers

Pfeiffer, J. William and Jones, John, E., *A Handbook of Structured Experiences for Human Relations Training*, Volumes I and III, 1974. University Associates Publishers, Inc., San Diego, CA 92126.

Pfeiffer, J. William, *A Handbook of Structured Experiences for Human Relations Training*, Volume X, 1983. University Associates Publishers, Inc., San Diego, CA 92126.

Mill, Cyril, *Activities for Trainers: 50 Useful Designs*, 1980. University Associates Publishers, Inc., San Diego, CA 92126.

Cathcart, Robert and Samover, Larry, *Small Group Communication: A Reader*, 1970. William C. Brown Publishers, Dubuque, Iowa.

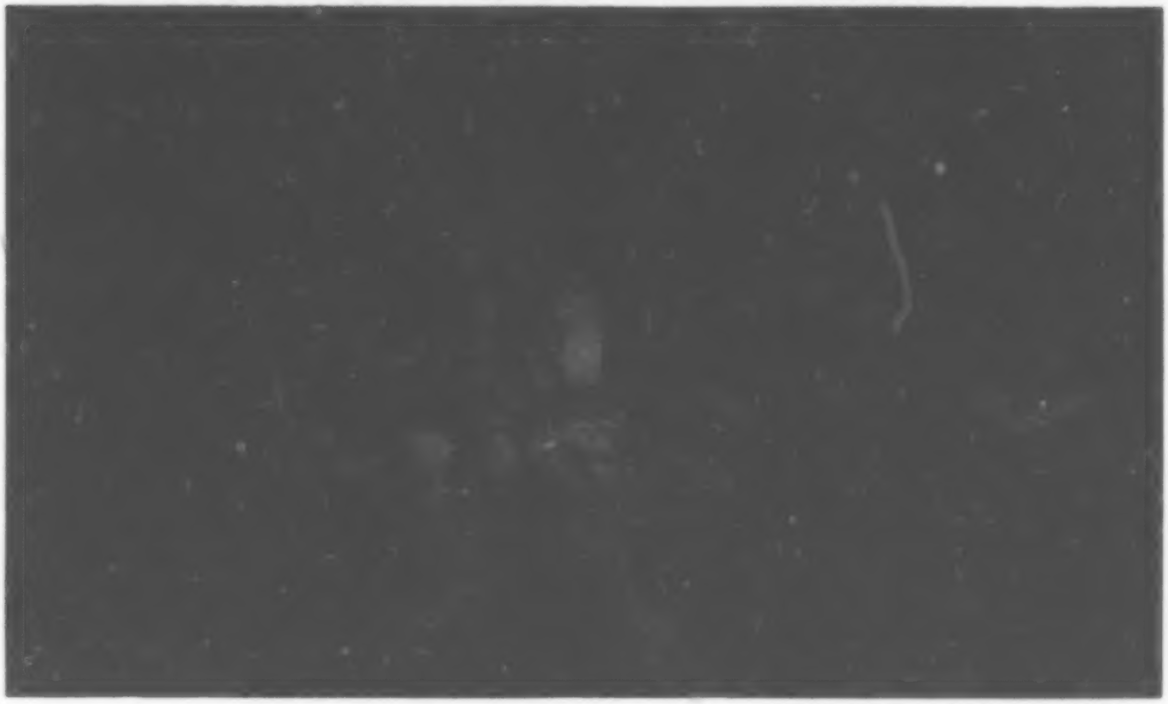
Brown, Cherie, R, *The Art of Coalition Building: A Guide for Community Leaders*, 1984. The American Jewish Committee, New York City, NY.

Dale, Duane, *How to Make Citizen Involvement Work: Strategies for Developing Clout*, 1978. University of Massachusetts, Citizen Involvement Training Project, Amherst, MA 01002.

Biagi, Bob, *Working Together: A Manual for Helping Groups Work More Effectively*, 1978. University of Massachusetts, Citizen Involvement Training Project, Amherst, MA 01002.

Dale, Duane with Magnani, David and Miller, Robin, *Beyond Experts, A Guide for Citizen Group Training*, 1979. University of Massachusetts, Citizen Involvement Training Project, Amherst, MA 01002.

Training, The Magazine of Human Resources Development. Lakewood Publications, Inc., 50 South Ninth St., Minneapolis, MN 55402, (612) 333-0471.



95

Employer-Supported Day Care

Appendix B

"Marketing" Child Care

The following analysis of how to market child care is excerpted from a presentation by Boston-based consultant Mav Pardee, as a part of the Project's employer-supported day care training package.

What are the barriers to increasing employer involvement in child care?

- Employers may not know there is a market.
- Corporations are often run by older men who may be unaware or insensitive about child care needs.
- Corporate "culture" is concerned with public image, law suits, and profit.
- Working parents are often reticent to speak openly to their employers about their child care needs.
- Companies may be reluctant to "open Pandora's Box." They may fear doing a needs assessment because they may raise expectations, and then not be able to follow through.
- There is not enough hard data on how corporations benefit from responding to their employees' child care needs; one exception is Sandy Burud's book, *Employer-Supported Child Care.*
- Employers may be ignorant of child care options.
- Employers may have concerns about liability; the increased awareness and media coverage of sexual abuse in day care facilities may augment fears about liability.

What are the external pressures on companies to increase their involvement in child care?

- The demand for services is growing:
  There are more working women with children of all ages!
  There are more female single parents.
  Women are having children later in life, after they've established themselves in the work world, and they are returning to work when their children are still young.
- There is an insufficient supply of day care:
  Parents are bringing their child care problems to work.
  Community day care programs are receiving less government support and are looking for new sources of revenue.
- There are more demands for corporations to become responsible regarding political, social and economic issues:
  Corporations are receiving requests to fund social services, education, community-based projects, etc.
  The federal government has increased the allowable amount of non-taxed corporate giving from 5% to 10%/year.

What are the internal pressures on companies to increase their involvement in child care?

- There is a growing sense of entitlement on the part of employees, forcing employers to seriously consider quality-of-worklife issues, including child care.
- Some companies have incorporated strategies which emphasize worker loyalty and participation and its effects on productivity.

- The economy is undergoing an industrial transformation, away from production and towards high technology and information systems, and employing more women in the process.

What factors influence the potential market for child care?

- The type of industry. High-growth industries are more likely to be open to child care. The most responsive employers thus far have been high tech, banks, insurance companies and hospitals.
- The role of unions. Historically, unions have not been responsive regarding child care issues because they are predominantly male. This is changing as more women enter the labor force, and there are some notable exceptions. (e.g. Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union has five on-site centers.) Nonetheless, some companies have responded to employee child care needs to avoid unionization.
- The size of the company. The largest companies are most likely to go out of their way to respond to child care needs (e.g. Bank of Boston, Federal Reserve Bank, Zayre).
- Centralized vs. decentralized decision-making. Some companies can only make decisions at a central level, which may or may not affect the entire company. Other companies have the jurisdiction to make decisions in local offices, although they may be connected to a larger structure.
- Influence of management style:

The high tech industries which tend to be more entrepeneurial and risk-taking, have taken the lead.

Younger managers in decision-making positions may have a working spouse and young children, and are therefore more sympathetic.

More women in management positions, as well as more men in dual careers, affects the sensitivity to child care needs.

Family-owned businesses may incorporate family values in management. Some examples include: Steelcase, a company which makes file cabinets and provides child care Information and Referral; Corning Glass, which has an on-site day care center; Stride-Rite (originally a family-owned business called Green Shoe) which has two day care centers for its employees, one located on-site.

- Composition of workforce. Child care is still seen as a women's issue. The majority of companies responding to their employees' child care needs employ a high percentage of women.

Major concerns

- What is the management agenda?
- What are the employees' needs?
- What are the existing resources?

Management Agenda

Companies are increasingly aware that child care is a hot issue, but they will still be cautious. THEIR MAIN CONCERN IS COST. They want:

- An option which will serve the greatest number of employees;
- An option which will succeed. They will look bad if their effort fails;
- Flexible, quick start-up with measurable results; and

- Recruitment advantages especially the high tech, insurance, and banking industries, which have a high turnover. Companies want to hold on to their key employees.

Employee Needs

What are parents' needs and how do you find out what they are?

- The Personnel Department is most aware of child care as a problem for employees. Develop a contact in the Personnel Department and find out: if absenteeism is a problem on school holidays, if the company is losing women who go out on maternity leave, if productivity is going down later in the day when school is out.

How Can You Determine if a Company is Interested?

- Read the paper, including the business page and other business journals.
- Is a company building or expanding? There may be a Task Force working on this.
- Is an employer making lots of money?
- Are there problems, such as odd-hour shifts which create difficulty in retaining employees? (e.g. hospitals, airports.)
- Is there competition for providing child care? (example: Howard Johnson's new day care center may elicit a response from the hotel industry.)
- Or call the Personnel Department directly. Say you're doing a survey of child care needs, and find out what they're doing.

How Can You Get a Company Interested?

- Make a presentation to business about child care. Co-sponsor it with an employer. Distribute "Childcare Matters in the Workplace" or other material on employer options.
- Use the video "Business of Caring." It's free for rental from the Women's Bureau, Department of Labor, Rm. 1600, JFK Building, Boston, MA (617) 223-4036, Vivian Buckles, contact.
- If you get together a mini-conference, have a resource person available on each of options (in addition to a film and booklet).
- If a number of small companies are interested, push for a consortium.
- *Get media* coverage for what you do.

Who are the Change Agents?

In addition to *you*, they are:

- Personnel Departments;
- Women mid-level managers;
- Key executives about to have a child, including women and men; and
- New parents in management positions.

Who are the Decision-Makers?

We may never see them! Most decisions are made on the Vice President or Benefits Management level. Find the linkage person or Change agent in or outside of the company who will carry through with the goals and objectives set. GOOD LUCK!

Resource Bibliography

Anderson, Kristin, *Corporate Initiatives that Support Working Parents: A Ten-Industry Review*, 1983. Center for Public Advocacy Research, 12W. 37th Street, New York, NY 10018.

Baden, Clifford and Friedman, Dana, *New Management Initiatives for Working Parents*, 1981. Wheelock College, Office of Continuing Education, 200 The Riverway, Boston, MA 02215.

Burud, Sandra Aschbacher, Pamela and McCroskey, Jacquelyn, *Employer-Supported Child Care: Investing in Human Resources*, 1984. Auburn House Publishing Company, 14 Dedham Street, Dover, MA 02030.

Catalyst, *Corporations and Two-Career Families: Directions for the Future*, 1981. Career and Family Center, Catalyst, 14 E. 60th Street, New York, NY 10022.

Child Care Resource Center, *A Statewide Profile of Employer-Supported Child Care*, 1983. CCRR Publications, 552 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02139

Children's Defense Fund, *Employed Parents and Their Children: A Data Book*, 1982. 122 C Street, N.W., Washington, D.C., 20001.

Commerce Clearinghouse, *Tax Incentives for Employer-Sponsored Day Care Programs*, 1982. Commerce Clearinghouse, 4025 W. Peterson Avenue, Chicago, IL 60646.

Fishel, Leo, Balodis, Inese and Kalus, David, *Appalachian Regional Commission Employer Supported Child Care Study: Final Report*, 1982. ARC, 1666 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C.

Friedman, Dana, *Encouraging Employer Support to Working Parents*, 1983. A Report of the Working Parents Project for the Carnegie Corporation of New York. Center for Public Advocacy Research, 12 W. 37th Street, New York, NY 10018.

Government Initiatives to Encourage Employer-Supported Child-care: The State and Local Perspective, 1983. Center for Public Advocacy Research, 12 W. 37th Street, New York, NY 10018.

Childcare Matters At the Workplace, 1984. Child Care Resource Center, 552 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02139.

Harris, Louis, "Families at Work: Strengths and Strains." *The General Mills American Family Report, 1980-1981*. General Mills, Inc. 9200 Wayzata Blvd., Minneapolis, MA 55440.

Kamerman, Sheila and Kahn, Alfred, *Child Care, Family Benefits, and Working Parents*, 1981. Columbia University Press, New York, NY.

Kanter, Rosabeth Moss, *Men and Women of the Corporation*, 1977. Basic Books, New York, NY.

Milkovich, George and Gomez, Luis, "Day Care and Selected Employee Work Behaviors," *Academy of Management Journal*, March 1976.

Naisbitt, John, *Megatrends*, 1982. Warner Books, New York, NY.

Perry, Katherine, *Employers and Child Care: Establishing Services Through the Workplace*, 1982. Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.

Rodgers & Rudman, Inc., *Child Care Options for High Technology Companies: A Decision-Making Guide*. Prepared for the Massachusetts High Technology Council, Inc., 60 State Street, Boston, MA 02109.

Salisbury, Dallas (ed.), *America in Transition: Implications for Employee Benefits*, 1982. Employee Benefits Research Institute, 2121 K Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

Smith, Ralph (Ed.), *The Subtle Revolution: Women at Work*, 1979. The Urban Institute, 2100 M Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037.

Toffler, Alvin, *The Third Wave*, 1981. Bantam Books, New York, NY.

Welfare Research, Inc., *On-Site Day Care: State of the Art and Model Development*, 1980. Empire State Day Care Services, Agency Building #2, Empire State Plaza, Albany, NY 12223.

Yankelovich, Daniel, *New Rules*, 1981. Random House, New York, NY.

Zeitlin, June and Campbell, Nancy Duff, *Strategies to Address the Impact of the Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981 on the Availability of Child Care for Low-Income Families*, 1981. National Women's Law Center, 1751 N Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

Day Care: The Critical Link Between Work and Family

- Nationally, there is an increase in demand for child care. Parents need child care in order to work! According to the U.S. Census Bureau:

In 1980, 40% of women with children under age 6 were in the labor force, in contrast with 25% in 1970.

In 1980, 65% of women with children between 6 and 16 were working, compared to 53% in 1970.

- The numbers of children are increasing:

The number of births during the 1980's will rise, averaging over 4 million births per year in the last half of the decade (almost as many as during the height of the 1950's "baby boom").

By 1990, there will be over 23.3 million children under age 6, a 23% increase from 1980.

50% of mothers in dual career families return to work in 6 months.

26% of mothers of children under 6 not now working (1.7 million women) would seek employment if affordable child care were available.

- In addition, the number of single working mothers is increasing...

In 1980, 59% of single mothers with children under 6 were in the labor force. By 1990, it is estimated that this number will rise to 63%.

The number of children under 10 from single-parent households is estimated to rise by 48% between 1980-1990 (6–8.9 million).

- In Massachusetts...

43% of women with children under 6 were working in 1980.

16%, or 1 out of every 6 families in Massachusetts were female-headed households (131,698 families).

66% of the female-headed households with children under six live below the poverty line. (In 1981, the federal poverty threshold for a family of four was $9,287.)

In 1979, the total number of children was 1.46 million. One out of seven of these children were living below the poverty line.

Child care is the crucial social and economic support that allows parents to maintain stable employment.

- The need for day care far exceeds the supply... In Massachusetts, there are approximately:

1700 group day care centers, with the capacity to serve 84,000 children, licensed by the Office for Children.

8,800 family day care homes, registered by the Office for Children, with a capacity to serve 40,000 children.

In 1980, it was estimated that approximately 89,500 children from families who had children under 6 with incomes below $15,000 in Massachusetts needed day care for work-related reasons. This figure was 600% more than the number of work-related slots available through state-funded day care services.

According to a 1980 DSS profile of parents using state-subsidized care:

- 87% of all Massachusetts families using center-based or family day care were working parents.
- 75% of those families using state-subsidized child care needed these services for work-related reasons.
- 57% of two-parent families would be below the poverty level without the second income.

Sources:

DSS Comprehensive Day Care Plan.

DSS statistics

"Below the Bottom Line. A Study of Poverty in Massachusetts."
Mass. CAP

Office for Children statistics

U.S. Census Bureau/Department of Labor

Massachusetts Association of Day Care Agencies

Employer-Supported Child Care Fact Sheet

Why Should Employers Respond to Employee Child Care Needs?

In a 1981 survey of 58 companies sponsoring on site day-care, the following benefits were cited:

- 88% reported increased ability to attract new employees.
- 72% reported lower absenteeism.
- 65% reported improved attitude toward employer.
- 55% reported improved attitude toward work.
- 57% reported lower job turnover.
- 36% reported improved community relations.
- 60% reported favorable publicity to employer.

Source:

Perry, Establishing Services Through The Workplace (1981)
U.S. Dept. of Labor.

- 67%–85% of respondents from 473 businesses in Minnesota reported that assistance with employees' child care had a positive effect on employee productivity, absenteeism, recruitment of new employees, retention of current employees, employee morale and tardiness.

Source:
Parents in the Workplace, Report 2, Minnesota Business Survey. Minneapolis: Toys' N Things, 1981.

According to a 1982 National Study of Employer Involvement in Childcare in which nearly 200 companies responded:

- 85% reported a positive impact on recruitment.
- 53% reported lower absenteeism.
- 90% reported improved employee morale.
- 65% reported less turnover.
- 49% reported increased productivity.
- 85% reported improved public relations.
- 83% reported increased employee work satisfaction.
- 73% reported increased employee motivation.
- 80% reported increased publicity.

Source:
Employer-Supported Child care, Burud, Aschbacher, and McCrosky, Auburn House Publishing Company.

What do parents say?

- 70% of mothers working full time responded that adequate child care helped job performance. (Family Circle, Feb. 20, 1979).
- Stress over child care problems were identified as a factor in industrial accidents by 40 women assembly line workers at an auto workers conference in Toronto.

Source:
U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, Child Care and Equal Opportunity for Women. Wash, D.C. 1981.

T COPY AVAILABLE